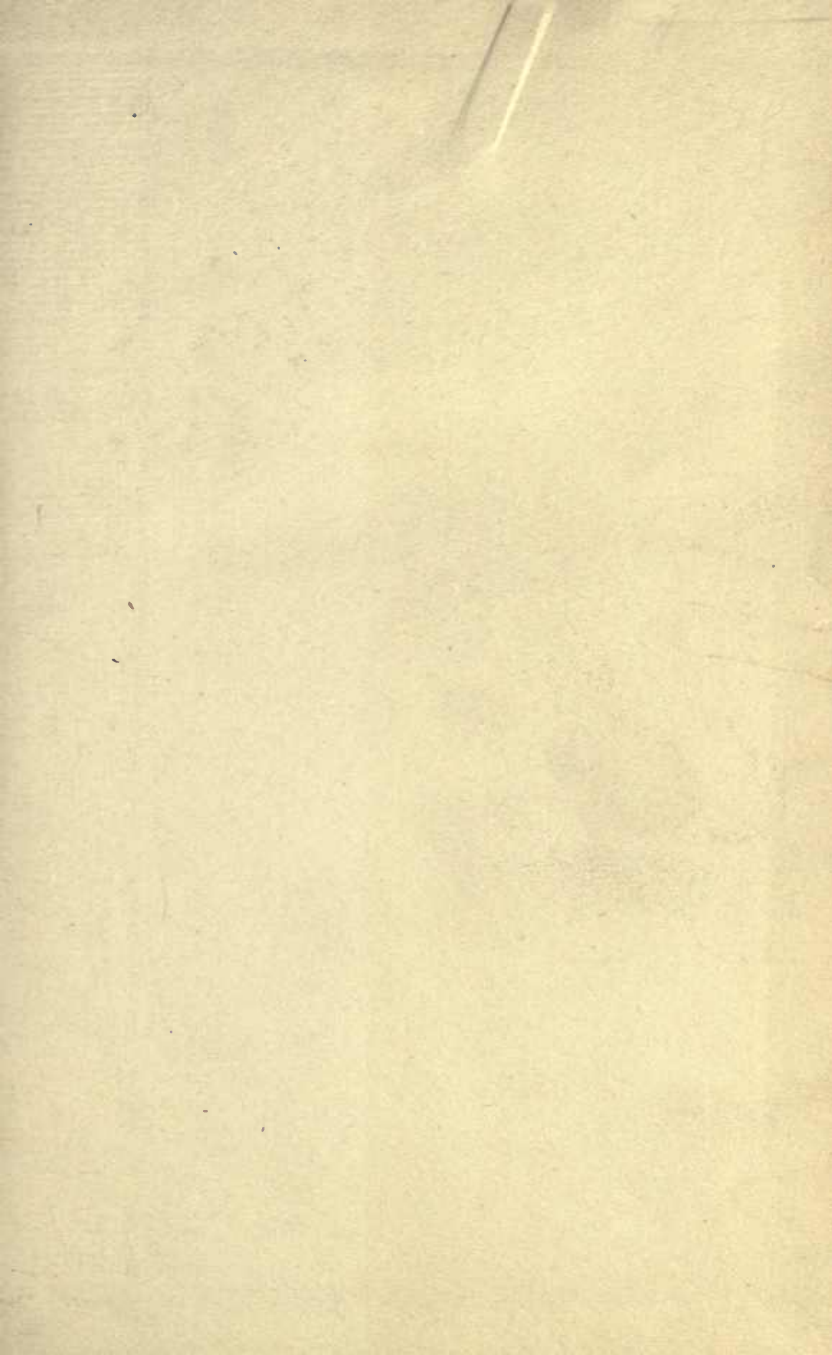


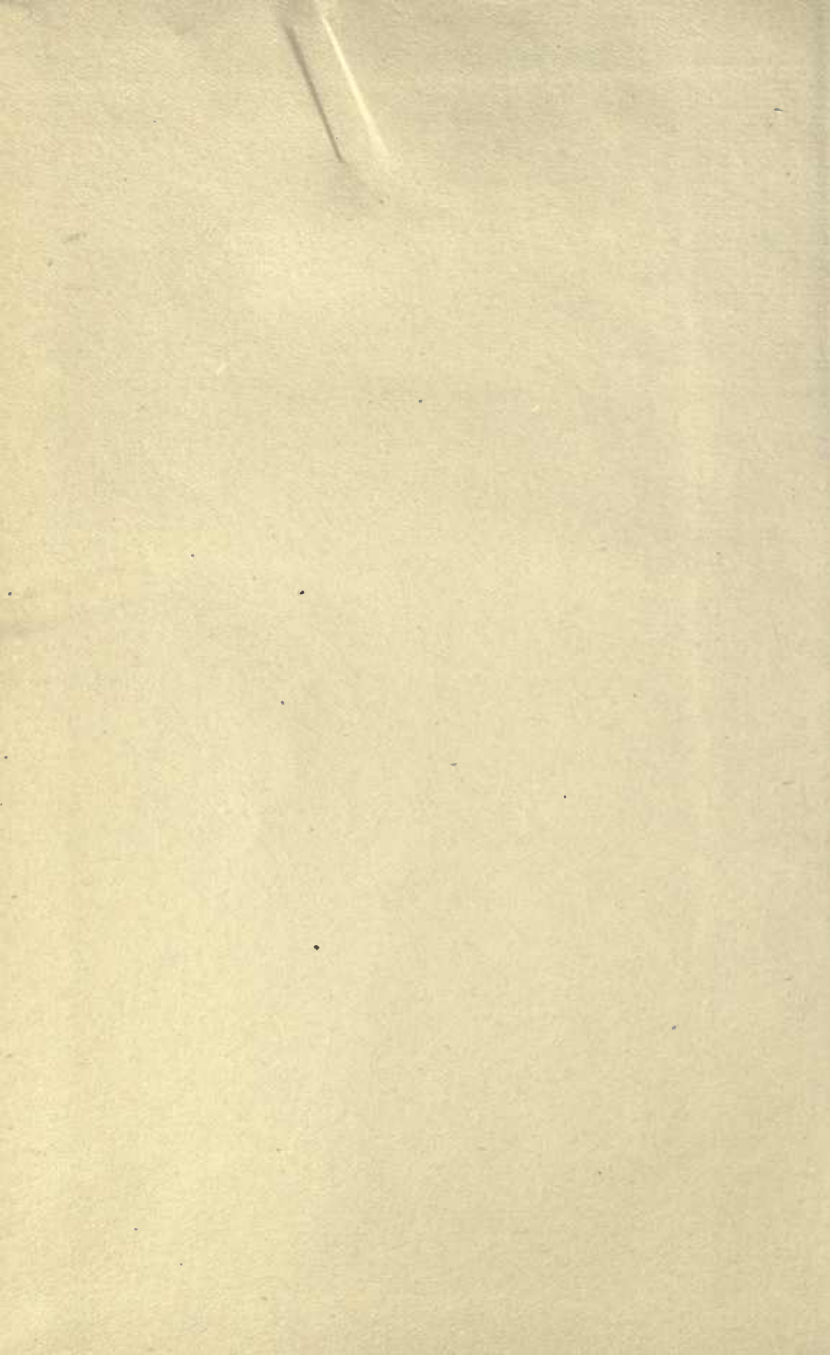
Robert Gordon  
*A Story of*  
THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION



J·E·BEADLES

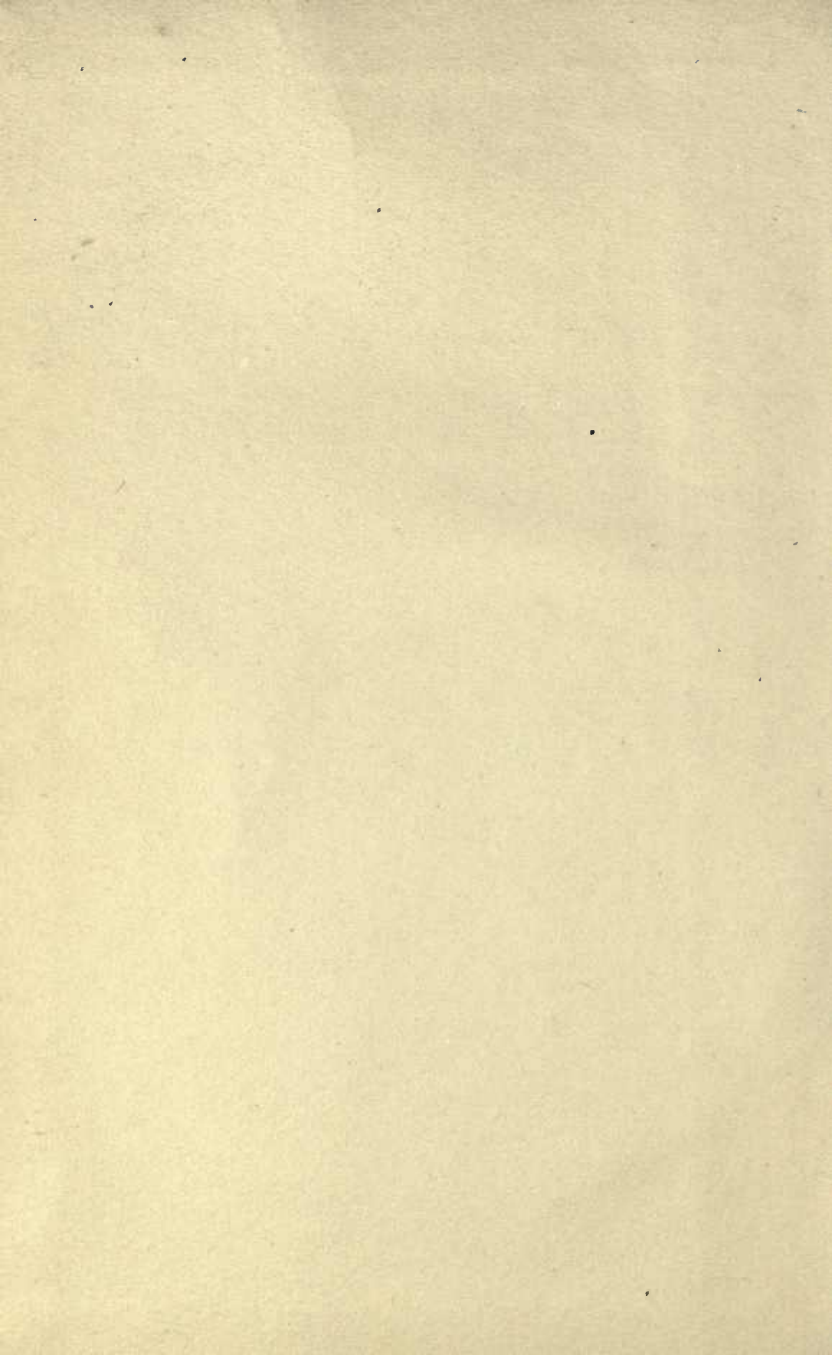
STRAND UNITED  
BOOK STORE  
121 PACIFIC AVENUE  
VAN BEACH, CALIF.



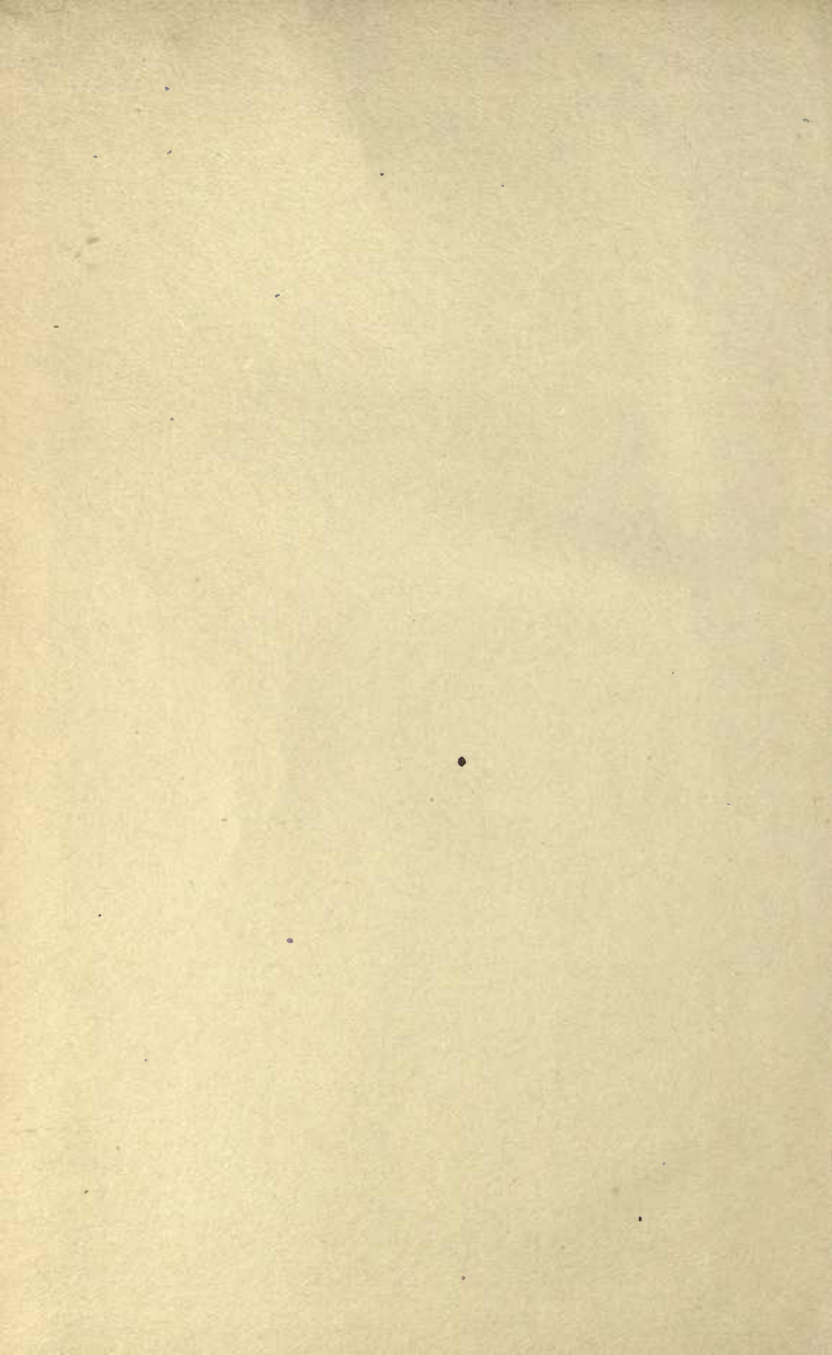


















THE FIRST MEETING.

ROBERT    ❁    ❁    ❁  
❁    ❁    ❁    GORDON

BY JOHN E. BEADLES



Published by BROADWAY  
PUBLISHING COMPANY  
835 BROADWAY NEW YORK

Copyright 1903

by

J. E. BEADLES

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED

TO LUTIE

AS A SLIGHT MEMORIAL OF A FATHER'S AFFECTION  
FOR AN ONLY DAUGHTER.

*October 20, 1902.*





# CONTENTS.

---

## CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
My Native Land .....	1

## CHAPTER II.

Near the Dark River .....	12
---------------------------	----

## CHAPTER III.

Among the Comanche Indians .....	20
----------------------------------	----

## CHAPTER IV.

The Captive .....	31
-------------------	----

## CHAPTER V.

The Rescue .....	45
------------------	----

## CHAPTER VI.

The Conde's Proposition .....	64
-------------------------------	----

## CHAPTER VII.

An Acceptable Position .....	76
------------------------------	----

## CHAPTER VIII.

Durango .....	93
---------------	----

## CHAPTER IX.

A Teacher of English .....	104
----------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER X.

The Thunder Storm .....	121
-------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XI.

The Heretic .....	139
-------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XII.

Driven Away .....	154
-------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XIII.

A Rebel Colonel .....	173
-----------------------	-----

	PAGE
CHAPTER XIV.	
Battle of Mt. Mextpal .....	202
CHAPTER XV.	
The Two Camps United .....	217
CHAPTER XVI.	
Twice a Captive .....	225
CHAPTER XVII.	
Rescued Again .....	241
CHAPTER XVIII.	
The Tide Turned .....	260
CHAPTER XIX.	
Friends Indeed .....	283
CHAPTER XX.	
In the Mountains Again .....	291
CHAPTER XXI.	
Three Graves .....	318
CHAPTER XXII.	
Bound for the United States .....	335
CHAPTER XXIII.	
The Parting .....	343
CHAPTER XXIV.	
Among Friends and Enemies .....	352
CHAPTER XXV.	
Love, the Power that Conquers All .....	379
CHAPTER XXVI.	
Kidnapped .....	396
CHAPTER XXVII.	
United at Last .....	415
CHAPTER XXVIII.	
Conclusion .....	434

## INTRODUCTION.

WE desire to say to you, before you read this work, that it is not all original, for a great part has been compiled from the best histories of Mexico, and also from the diary of my grandfather, who traveled over a large part of the territory which my hero travels. You will find that we have interwoven with these historical facts, fiction enough to give it the form of a story; thinking that by so doing, it will be more interesting. And believing that personal experience is always more attractive when related by the principal actor, we have assumed in this work, that he is giving a history of his own life.

But while you notice the acts of our hero, we wish you to look into the conditions of that country, one of the brightest portions of the American continent, rich in minerals, vegetation and natural resources; but a pauper in everything that makes a nation. Then see if you cannot find a parallel in the condition of every country where tyranny has ruled.

However this may be, if we can entertain, instruct, and make you better by what we have here written, we will have done all that we have attempted.

J. E. B.





# ROBERT GORDON.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### MY NATIVE LAND.

*Where'er I roam, whatever lands I see,  
My heart, untraveled, fondly turns to thee.*

—GOLDSMITH.

IN the autumn of the year 1828, I set out from Massachusetts for the remote regions of the southwest on the Spanish frontier, where I reside. When I entered the steamboat from Philadelphia to Baltimore, having taken a general survey of the motley group, which is usually seen in such places, my eyes finally rested on a young gentleman, apparently between twenty-five and thirty years of age, remarkable for his handsome face, the symmetry of his form, and for his uncommon union of interest, benevolence, modesty and manly thought, which are seldom seen united in a male countenance of great beauty. I am a firm believer in animal magnetism, but I admit that this electrical attraction of kindred minds at first sight is



inexplicable. The world may laugh at the impression if it pleases. I have, through life, found myself attracted or repelled at first sight, and oftentimes without being able to find in the object of these feelings any assignable reason, either for the one or the other. I have experienced, too, that, on after acquaintance, I have seldom had occasion to find these first impressions deceptive.

There was something in this young gentleman, which immediately and strongly enlisted my feelings in his favor, and I watched, during the passage, to make such acquaintance with him as such places admit. No decorous opportunity for such acquaintance occurred, and I only learned from the way-book that his name was Robert Gordon, for Durango in Mexico.

Perhaps the circumstances which so much fixed my attention upon the young gentleman were an indescribable air of contentment and tranquillity, as though satisfied with himself; a carelessness of the observation of others as though he had been alone in the boat. Nothing interests me so much in a person as to see him deriving his resources from himself, and not drawing upon the feverish stimulants of display, and the fancied figure which he makes in the eyes of another; but on the reflections and enjoyments which spring up spontaneously within himself. His dress and his servants indicated wealth, and his countenance wore the tinge of a southern sun. I noticed that there was a common feeling on board the boat to learn who he was. This was particularly discernible among the young ladies. But, though his manners indicated great courtesy, he seemed rather shy of communication; and there were many who left the boat, probably suffering more from the pain of ungratified curiosity, than I did. In Baltimore I lost sight of him.

I crossed the mountains on the national road to Wheel-

ing and descended the Ohio to Louisville, at which place I embarked on board a steamboat bound for the place of my final destination. My first look upon my fellow passengers discovered among them the fine looking, dignified stranger, who had interested me so much on my way to Baltimore. The river was very low. His course must be the same as mine for several hundred miles. Our captain calculated that his boat would frequently ground, and, of course, did not think of running at night. The passengers were mostly young men of that empty and boisterous character that is but too common on these waters; men equally without manners, who know only to swear, play cards and drink. I felt pleased to think that the stranger could not escape my acquaintance; that, in our assortment of passengers, a man of his apparent character could not have a fellow feeling with them, and that I should find in his society a relief from the tedium of a long and tiresome passage and the impatience of a prolonged absence from my family. A steamboat without a suitable companion becomes a prison.

Our passage was made under very pleasant circumstances apart from the character of the passengers. We had a fine boat, an obliging captain, and an excellent fare. It is a beautiful river, particularly in the autumn. Its shores furnished us with plenty of game, and when we lay by on its wide, clean sandbars, we amused ourselves by shooting among the countless multitude of ducks and geese. When the boat grounded, as it often did, while the hands were getting her off, we had our pleasant promenades in the woods, some in pursuit of game and some for wild fruits. The weather was delightful. Nature, too, was laying on her best coloring in her grand painting of the season, in all the hues of red, purple, yellow and green. When disengaged from the bars our boat swept

swiftly and majestically around the curves of the river. The rest raised their reckless laugh, told their stale jests, and played their cards to their own satisfaction. Our mutual want of taste for these enjoyments brought us together, and acquaintance led to intimacy. Our communications became frank and cordial, and we as naturally seated ourselves under the awning on the deck to enjoy the autumnal landscape and taste the cool breeze, and to enter into these pleasant conversations, as the rest sat down to their cards. Of course, we inquired the place of each other's birth and residence, and were naturally led, in the progress of this acquaintance, to go into the color and events of our past lives. I communicated without reserve "the short and simple annals" of my career thus far on life's pilgrimage; encouraged by the promise that this confidence should be repaid by the history of his own.

It was commenced, laid aside and resumed, as our feelings, the temperature and circumstances dictated. As his story advanced, my interest became intense. This story I now propose to give to the reader, as I received it from him. If it interests him half as much as it did me he will not complain that I have taken him along with me as a companion.

He premised his narrative by observing that he should have to apologize for the frequent use of the important pronoun of the first person, and the necessity of recurring to his own exploits and his own praises. I insisted that he should begin, and that he should tell all. "If," he replied, "you find me in this history as a very pretty fellow, only ask yourself how I could help it? And when you hear extravagant and foolish praise of this sort, or any other, we will agree not to look in each other's faces, and you must suppose this the idle exaggeration of a very partial third person."



"Besides, I forewarn you, that, although nothing will be related but what most certainly did take place, nothing but what is most strictly true, much of my story will have in your eye the semblance of being too wide from the common course of events, and of drawing largely on your readiness to believe on the faith of the narrator. But if the whole story of the Mexican Revolution could be told, a thousand adventures, in comparison of which mine would assume the air of commonplace occurrences. I forestall another charge: if I really describe myself as I have been, and my adventures as they occurred, this true history will seem to you little short of a romance. You matter-of-fact people here in the States are inclined either to ridicule romantic feelings and adventures, or, still worse, to view it as having immoral tendencies and tending to unbalance the mind, and unfit it for the severer and mere important duties of life."

"Have no fears on that score," I cried, "for I, at least, am not one of them. It is so long since I have heard anything but dollars and cents, the mere mercenary details of existence, that I long to be introduced to another world. I heartily despise the idle declamation against romance, which I so often hear. Poesy and romance are the higher and holier matters of the intellectual world. All noble conceptions, all holy thoughts in the mind, are undoubtedly connected with the qualified love and indulgences of romantic feelings. It is the only thing that will cause one to die for his country. It is the very foundation of patriotism.

"God knows the tendency of everything in this country, and in the world at this time, is just toward this order of things. The first question of the marriageable daughter is that of the sagacious father, how much money has he? What are his expectations? We would not have silly

damselfs pine over sickening and long-winded tales of love; but the more chivalrous, high-minded and romantic our young people are raised the better. I would have little hopes of a young man until I was persuaded that his bosom had at some time expanded with dreams of romance. How delightfully Addison lets us into his bosom in detailing one of his day dreams. Away with the miserable idea of rendering men more selfish than they are. I would much rather the eye of my child would kindle at hearing the recitation of beautiful verses than to be dazzled by the glitter of gold. Indiscriminate avidity for romance may be a great evil. I contend not for the abuse of anything. Deprive life of its poesy, existence of imagination, and what do you leave us? You need have no fears of being romantic. You have awakened curiosity from a new source; and this is just the time and place to listen to a story of that sort."

He then told the following story:

I am happy to find that we are natives of the same State. I was born in a small village not far from Boston. I was the youngest but two, of eight children, and reared in the strictest form of the Puritan church, and I feel the benefit of this early training. I am sure that my early impressions were engraven too deeply on my heart to be erased.

With what delight I trace the remembrance of my youth in that dearest and best of all lands! Where can be found on this earth better principles, better nurtured and happier families than those of that region? Even yet, after so many years of wandering and vicissitudes, I recall in my dreams the hoary head and the venerable form of that father, who used to bend the knee before us in family prayer, and who taught my infant voice to pray.



I find pictured in my mind that long range of meadows, which front our village church. I see my father at the head, and my mother and the rest of the family, according to their ages, following each other's steps through those delightful meadows, as we went up to the house of God. I see even now the meadow-pink, and hear the note of the lark, startled and soaring from our path. There is the slow and limpid stream, in which I have angled and bathed a thousand times. There was the hum of the bees on the fragrant clover. Well, too, do I remember the venerable minister, with his white hair, his earnest voice and familiar form. The small and rustic church was filled to overflowing with those who had there received baptism, and who expected to repose with their fathers in the adjoining consecrated enclosier. And there, opposite to the church, was the village school house, one of those thousand nurseries of our country's greatness. Dear remembrances! How often ye visited my dreams in the desolate land of the stranger.

Excuse digressions which force themselves upon me whenever I compare the land of my birth with the countries in which I have since sojourned. I pass over the events of my early years, observing only that I was the most limber athlete, the best wrestler, swimmer and skater in school. I was the favorite of my father and mother, and was therefore selected to be the scholar of the family. I was the favorite of the school, too, until it was divulged that I was to be sent to college. From that time I had to encounter my full share of envy. I was sent to an academy, and thence in due process of time to Harvard College, where I graduated with the usual honors.

Of the character I formed, of the impressions I received at that rich and noble institution, I am not, perhaps, an adequate judge. I believe you were educated in the same

school. I was naturally studious and sedentary in my habits, reading and devouring everything that came in my way. A strong propensity inclined me to visionary musings, and dreaming with my eyes open. I theorized, speculated, doubted and tasked my thoughts to penetrate the nature of mind, and the region of possibility. I investigated with eagerness the evidence of an eventful hereafter. I read the works of Socrates, Plato, Cicero and Seneca, and was prepared by reading them for the perusal of the Gospel. I placed before my mind the simple grandeur of the lowly Nazarene, compared with these sages. I was deeply struck with the tender and affectionate spirit of the apostles. In what a different world was the empire of their thoughts and hopes! How wide in their views, sentiments and aims from the men of the world! Here were men, to whom riches, power, ambition and distinction were as nothing. All that the world hopes or fears was to them a mere childish dream. What motives for an unalterable resignation!

None had yet discovered my propensities for display. It had kindled with the dreams of ambition. Nothing had fed my thoughts like our national celebrations and gatherings of the people upon solemn or festive occasions. When the long and solemn procession was formed, when all that was imposing and venerable in place and office joined it, when the gorgeous ranks of the volunteer corps were displayed, and the full band struck up, unobserved tears would fill my eyes. My bosom swelled. And I would return to my study, and "Thou," I said to myself, "art destined to poverty and obscurity. Every avenue to wealth and fame has been preoccupied, and you must expect to make your grave with the countless millions who are forgotten." The first and favorite wish of my parents was that I should become a minister of the gospel. But I

had too high an estimate of the sacredness of those functions, and too deep and just a sense of my constitutional disqualifications to assume that profession.

I graduated in my nineteenth year, and a little before that time my mind received that coloring, and took that bent, which has determined my course and caused me to become what I am. I became extravagantly fond of books of voyages and travels. I frequently wished to float down from the head waters of the Mississippi to the Gulf, or to follow the intrepid Lewis and Clark over the Rocky Mountains to the western sea. I have introduced this digression to account to you for those original impulses, under the influences of which I have been a wanderer in the distant region where I now have my home.

It pains me to remember the disappointment and distress of my parents when they ascertained that my mind had taken this new direction. Words would fail me to describe the remonstrances and disputes which they held with me, to persuade me from my purpose. How often did my mother paint to me the desolation and sinking of heart which I should experience, if I were cast on a sick bed in a strange land, and far away from her affectionate nursing. When they demanded of me my plans, and what ultimate views I had in this new and boundless country, I could give them but a vague idea, for they were too indefinite for me to define. I knew that I intended to descend this river and the Mississippi, and ascend the Red River, of the beauty and wealth of which I had formed the most extravagant ideas; and I had a presentiment of future greatness, wealth, and happiness to befall me somewhere in the Spanish country beyond, that I intended to make my way as well as I could, and follow the leading of events. When my resolutions were once formed, I had inherited from my father inflexibility of purpose. My father had



so often applauded this trait in my character, and with no small satisfaction, had so often traced the lineage of this virtue to himself, that he could poorly blame me for the exercise of it in the present case. He hinted to me, indeed, what a glorious prospect there was, that I might succeed the present minister of our parish, who was old and infirm; or if I would rather choose to be a lawyer, that when he should become a justice, a dignity to which he had been aiming for years, I might perhaps attend the sessions, and plead before him. He touched upon the universal homage paid to a doctor, his plump pony, his neat saddle bags, and his glorious long bills. All would not do; and my friends all allowed that I was a headstrong and stubborn dog, just like my father before me; and that it was a fine genius, a fine face, and a college education, all thrown away. My mother's remonstrance was the most painful of all, for I knew she loved me with her whole heart and soul. With how much earnestness and affection she painted to me the solid independence and greatness which I should be sure to attain at home, all of which I was throwing away on a romantic and visionary project in the wilderness of the West; all this I had but too much cause to remember afterward. Those who had envied me, already took up a lamentation over me, as though the predictions about me had actually been accomplished; and took it for granted that in poverty and misery I should end my days.

When they saw that I was actually making arrangements to set off for my El Dorado, my father and mother, with the utmost consideration, made preparations of whatever they thought would conduce to my comfort and welfare. They furnished me with such a portion of the property as, added to my education, would equal me with what my father supposed he might leave the other children. The day in which I lost sight of the paternal roof was a sad one to me. Who

can describe the tenderness of the parting tears of such a mother as mine? When I left the cheerful, industrious and happy group, knowing, too, that they considered me as one forever lost to them, my resolutions would have given way, had not my established character of sticking to my purpose come to my aid. I received a great deal of excellent advice, and from the hands of my father a Bible, and earnest counsel to make good use of it. My mother and sisters had been provident in furnishing my trunk with the comforts necessary for a traveler; I received the parting blessing with indescribable emotion, and tore myself away.



## CHAPTER II.

## NEAR THE DARK RIVER.

*"Happy the man, who has not seen the smoke ascending from the cottage of the stranger."*

AT Boston I commenced the route which we are now traveling, and until I began to ascend the Alleghany Mountains, I did not feel all the ties of kindred and country completely severed. I could connect, by the chain of association, points that were distant, if they were but in the same country, and inhabited by men of the same character and pursuits. But when such a wide barrier was interposed between me and "faderland"; when I began to descend among a people of a different character and foreign pursuits; then I began to experience misgiving of mind, and the dismal feeling of homesickness. Then the image of my mother visited my dreams, and it was a dreary feeling to awake and find that the visit was but a dream. These feelings were not at all alleviated by my reception at the first town to which I came on the Ohio. A keelboat was on the eve of starting for Alexandria, on Red River. I took passage in it, and was immediately introduced to a mode of existence, not a little different from the seclusion and meditation of my studies at the university.

The degree of water did not admit the descent of steam-

boats. In fact, there were but few on these waters at that time, and I was compelled to take this conveyance or wait the rising of the river. At first the novelty of this way of life, the freshness of the scenery on this beautiful river, and the whimsical character of the boatmen amused me. Their strange curses, it is true, grated on my ear. It was an order of beings as different from any with whom I had yet become acquainted, as though they had descended from another planet. Their dialect, too, made up of equal proportions of a peculiar slang and profanity, is at the same time both ludicrous and appalling. The motto of this singular race is well known to be 'a short and merry life.' The reckless indifference with which they expose themselves in places of danger, the damp and sultry atmosphere, and the mosquitoes at night, make their career generally short, and their death sudden. Their discourse with each other, like their dialect, strangely mixes a kind of coarse wit, ridicule and impiety together. They talk of death with the utmost indifference, and generally encounter it as they talk of it. A thrill of horror mixes with the involuntary smile, as you hear the strange phrase in which they discuss this subject.

We had much fatigue, encountered many dangers, and there were many quarrels and reconciliations before we reached our destination. The dark water of the river, only ruffled by the darting of huge fishes, the foaming path of the monster alligator or a thousand little silvery fishes leaping from the water and sparkling like diamonds; the lazy flight of ponderous birds, slowly flapping their wings, and sailing along just over the surface of these dark waters; a soil greasy and slippery with a deposit of slime; trees marked fourteen feet high by an overflow of half the year; gullies several feet deep, and large enough to be the outlet of rivers, covered at the bottoms with decaying logs, and

connecting the river with broad sluggish lakes, too thickly covered with a coat of green to be ruffled by the winds which can scarcely find their way through the dense forest; snakes, writhing their ugly forms at the bottom of these gullies; such was the scenery that met my eye as I advanced into the region, which had been so embellished by my fancy. My eyes, ears, and nostrils joined to admonish that here fever had erected his throne. When I lay down at night millions of mosquitoes would raise their dismal hum and settle in my face. Drive away the first thousand, and another thousand was ready to succeed, and 'in that war there was no discharge.' A hundred owls, in all the tones of screaming, hooting, grunting, in every note, from the wail of an infant to the growl of a bear, sang our requiem. Sleep under such circumstances is little better than none.

The inhabitants were in full keeping with the surroundings. Their complexion was yellowish, or, to use their phrase, "tallow faced." To shake with the ague was their daily occupation. The children were dirty, ragged, and as mischievous as they were deformed. They rolled upon the slippery clay with an agility and alertness, from their appearance altogether incredible, for you would suppose them too feeble and clumsy to move. There was something unique about the persons of both the old and young. They laughed and shouted and drank and blasphemed, and uttered their tale of obscenity, or, it may be of murder, with bacchanalian joyousness. Shut your eyes and you would suppose that you were in the merriest group in the world; open them and you would almost believe the chilling stories of vampires.

One evening while we were laying by, not far from the mouth of Red River, on the verge of the bank above us, in a little opening in the dead forest, was a family such as I



have described. The wife and mother in this family had once been pretty. She had had the ague for years in succession and now had the swelling, filthiness, brilliant eye, flippant tongue, and ran on from story to story with more than the garrulity of an old Frenchwoman. She informed me that for a month in the preceding spring they had been overflowed and were in the midst of a flooded swamp, thirty miles in diameter. They built a house on a raft of logs fastened together, and secured from floating away with grapevines. On this raft was stationed the family, oxen, pigs, and a barrel of whiskey to keep up their spirits. She took me for a cotton planter, and said: "Now, you planters have but one house, and we wood cutters have two. We have our floating house on the raft, and when the river falls we build another on the ground. Look you there! Only three paces from my door used to lie of a sunny morning a couple of thundering alligators, and my Franky there," pointing to a boy who seemed to be about four years old, and as ugly an urchin as you would wish to see, "that there boy would needs be playing some of his rusty shines, and so he crawled out, and gave one of them a rap on the snout with a broomstick. The monster devil curled his tail and gave Franky a slap which tossed him in the air like a ball; and the beast would have had the eating of Franky in a trice, but I heard him scream as the alligator struck him. I seized a kettle of boiling water and threw it on the horrid critter just as he showed his white teeth to eat Franky, and this drove the gentleman into the water."

The well remembered song of my infancy rang in my ears:

*"No more shall the horn call me out in the morn,"*

and a chill as of death came over me when I thought that this was the reality of that picture, which, to my imagina-

tion, had been so delightful. I felt, too, the depth and application of the old proverb, "that one-half of the world does not know how the other half lives." The comforting prediction of my friends rung in my ears, "In that savage country you will lay your bones." Certainly! thought I, the assignment of your bounds must be the sport of a blind destiny. There are hills and dales, and mountain streams, and beautiful breezes, and cheerful scenery, and millions of unoccupied acres of fertile country, where the means of subsistence even are at least as easy as here. How have voluntary agents, with the power of locomotion, fixed themselves here from choice? The boatmen accounted for it by saying that it took all sorts of people to make a world.

I made my first residence in these regions, and my first acquaintance with Southern men, manners, and things at Alexandria. It may be supposed that I studied the country and people with an intense interest. I had many things to learn, and many things to unlearn, to prepare me for this study. I was at once aware that much that had been said of the country abroad was founded either on ignorance or misrepresentation. This town is in a rich cotton planting country, where fortunes have been very rapidly acquired. The planters, as a rule, are honorable and high minded men. They are all in the highest degree hospitable. Acquiring their money easily, they spend it with reckless profusion. I was invited with great courtesy to their balls, of which they were very fond. I shared their amusements, as far as my habits of life would allow me, and more than all I joined them in their hunting parties, of which I was almost as fond as they were. Their favorite chase, and, I may add, mine, too, was hunting by night.

But amidst these pleasures and sports, an evil was impending over my head, one of the terrible things which my mother had most often rung in my ears, as my probable



lot in a sickly and strange land. I had inhaled enough of the miasma to give me the fever of the country. I was seized so suddenly and violently as to become unconscious for some time. When I regained consciousness I found myself in bed surrounded by strange faces, and so extremely weak as to be unable to turn myself. The people were as kind to me as I had any right to expect. But accustomed to see many cases of the kind, and not used to making much discrimination, consider all cases as the same thing. A frightful ringing was in my ears. The continued uproar of the place where I was became confounded in my head by this ringing, the effect of the disease. From the united influence of these things I fell into the wildest delirium. Frightful circles of light glared before my eyes, especially at night. At one time I imagined myself an inhabitant of the infernal regions. I saw the fiends about me, heard their exultant shouts, and felt them pouring baskets of burning coals upon my head. Then, in a moment, I was transported to the churchyard, back of the church in my native village, and saw my friends digging my grave. Then the scene would shift and become a little more pleasant. I would see the beautiful meadows in front of my father's house and my father and the family going to church and chiding me for lingering behind. In those paroxysms one thought was always uppermost, that I was away from home and struggling to disengage myself from something that detained me, that I might escape and get home. Unknown to the people of the house I had my lucid intervals, in which I lay in a state of infantine weakness. Sick as I was, and apparently on the verge of death, I felt a kind of strange pleasure in hearing them discuss the subject of my death and burial. If any one wishes to know exactly of how much consequence he is in the eyes

of the people, who have no concern in him, and no motive to induce them to manifest what they have not, let that person be sick in a strange place and hear the people discuss his case with all the recklessness of persons who think they are neither heard nor understood. We would then discover that there are many people in the world, who think it would get along very well without us. We might then have striking foretastes of how little they would disturb themselves about our exit after we are actually gone. There were other times, in which I felt keenly and bitterly the dread of death, the unwillingness to "cross the dark river," and an earnest desire that I might recover. I have reasons to think that I received great and uncommon attention; for, although they were people who subsisted by such cases as mine, they appeared to take great care of me. I lay sick a long time, and even after my fever had been checked, it was not expected for many days that I would recover. But, as it happened, the event disappointed all their calculations. The Author of my being had more for me to do and to suffer on the earth. I regained perfect consciousness, though in such extreme weakness, as not to be able to turn myself in bed. My first feelings were those of devout thankfulness. My first lucid thoughts expressed themselves in a question from the Bible, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" Why had I wandered away from a peaceful and religious home, and from the tender and endeared relatives to a place like this? The anxiety, the tenderness, the maternal nursing of my mother in a fever, which I had had at home, visited my mind. Oh! I thought all their evil omens fell far short of the actual state of things which I had experienced. I earnestly wished that all those who had the wandering bump in their skulls could know what I did, without

knowing it at the same expense, that they could see and comprehend all that a sick and unfriended stranger has to hope under such circumstances. How quietly afterward they would set themselves down to any honest pursuit that would preclude the necessity of wandering.



## CHAPTER III.

## AMONG THE COMANCHE INDIANS.

BUT I perceive that I am digressing, and drawing too largely on your patience. About the time I regained my strength a party of young men were establishing a partnership to travel into the Spanish country, to traffic with the Spaniards and Indians for mules, horses and furs. Their project was such as would gratify my favorite propensity to travel into that region. They appeared to be young men of standing, and had the appearance and manners of gentlemen. I joined them as a partner. There were eight of us in all, well armed and equipped, and furnished with as much merchandise as our funds would allow us to purchase. They laughed heartily at one part of my outfit, which was a small, but choice collection of books. We packed our merchandise, provisions, tents, ammunition, etc., on mules, and started with gay hearts to enter the Spanish country by way of the Arkansas.

We closed our arrangements at Natchitoches, the last village in Louisiana toward the Spanish frontier. On the Kiamesia we passed the American garrison, and saw the cheering sight of the spirit-stirring stars and stripes, waving above the rude fortress and the comfortable quarters, three hundred leagues from the compact population of the country. We admired the genius of a country yet so



young, and which had thus early learned to stretch her maternal arms to these remote deserts in token of efficient protection to the frontier people from the terrors of the ruthless savages.

It was not far from this garrison that my eyes dilated and my heart expanded, as we opened upon one of those boundless grassy plains that stretch beyond the horizon, and almost beyond imagination. Such a view presents to me the image of infinitude and eternity still more strongly than a distant view of the ocean. We entered with the rising sun. One part of the glorious orb seemed to touch the verdure, and the other the sky.

On these level plains some of my dreams of the pleasure of wandering were realized. We were all in the morning of life, full of health and spirits, on horseback and breathing a most salubrious air, with a boundless horizon open before us, and shaping our fortune and success in the elastic mould of youthful hope and imagination, we could hardly be other than happy. Sometimes we saw, scouring from our path, horses, mules, buffaloes and wolves, in countless numbers, and we took with almost too much ease to give pleasure to the chase, whatever we needed for food. The course of streams across the prairies is marked by a fringe of wood and countless flowering shrubs.

The day before we came in view of the Rocky Mountains I saw the greatest, and, to me, almost sublime spectacle, an immense herd of wild horses, for a long time hovering around our path across the prairie. I had often seen small numbers of them before, but here there were thousands of them. Their movements seemed to be almost as rapid as the wind. At one time they were in our front, then almost as quick as thought, they were seen on our flanks, and then in our rear. After viewing our cavalcade

for a time, they took to their heels with a noise like that of an earthquake and in a few seconds were all out of sight.

It was in the opening of spring, after a slow and easy journey of five weeks from Natchitoches, that we arrived in sight of the Rocky Mountains at a point where the Arkansas finds its way from among them to the plains. No time will erase from my mind the impression of awe and grandeur, excited by the distant view and the gradual approach to them. The plains continue quite up to the point where the mountains seem to rise out of the earth almost perpendicularly for several thousand feet. With such contrast, and from such a pedestal, rises Pike's Peak. His blackening sides and hoary summit are a kind of seamark at an immense distance over the plains. He elevates his gigantic head, and frowns upon the sea of verdure below him. Solitary and detached from the hundred mountains, apparently younger members of the family shrink with filial awe at a distance from him.

At the foot of this mountain it was arranged that each one of us should proceed to a different point among the Indians, to purchase horses and mules, and that we should reunite at Santa Fé. For my part, I now began to exercise self-scrutiny, and to feel myself disqualified in every point of view for this kind of traffic. A certain percentage was ultimately to be awarded me, according to the profit and losses, and in proportion to my contribution to the common stock. As I frankly confessed my disinclination to the active labors of the partnership, it was stipulated that on these conditions I should be a silent partner, and might find my way as I chose to the place of meeting, and at an assigned time in Santa Fé. I was thus left at liberty to gratify my curiosity in my own way, and was esteemed a kind of good natured

scholar, with my head turned too much to books to understand the value of money, or to enter into the pleasure of making it. One of the company, a young man from New York, had been educated to a considerable degree, and was, in other respects, a man of different order of thought and manners from the rest. Between him and me there existed a kind of companionship. He understood a smattering of French and enough of the language of the Comanches to converse with them. To him was assigned a central village of the Comanches among the mountains, as the place where he was to commence his traffic. He represented his place as being singularly romantic and beautiful, for he had been there before, and the Indians as the most noble and interesting people of all that region. He requested me to accompany him, holding forth all the usual inducements which operate with most force upon such adventures. From very different motives from those which he held out, I consented to follow him.

The morning after our arrival at the mountains we made our final arrangements, and each member started for his assigned place. My companion and myself began to scramble up the rocky and precipitous banks of the Arkansas, and made our way toward the waters of the Rio Grande. We were often obliged to dismount and lead our horses through the defiles, and we found great difficulty in getting along, although we were on the track by which the savages come down to the plains. We came to the banks of a torrent, and wound along a path, barely wide enough for one horse to pass, with perpendicular points of mountains often hanging a thousand feet above our heads. On the evening of the third day, just before sunset, we entered a long and very narrow gorge between two stupendous elevations, with a narrow path of smooth



limestone, washed on the edge by the foaming waters of the torrent. We threaded this gorge perhaps two miles, and just as twilight was fading we entered the most beautiful valley that I had ever seen. Dusky as it was in the depths of the valley, the last rays of the sun still glittered on the eternal ices of the summit of the mountains. The bells of horses and cattle tinkled, dogs bayed and children hallooed. A compact village of Indian cabins dotted the opposite extremity of the valley. The squaws were crossing each other's paths, carrying water on their heads, and performing the other kitchen duties in the open air. Naked boys were shooting arrows at a mark, and the men were smoking. My companion, who knew the village, walked forward with the confidence of an acquaintance. He approached the sentinels, two of whom always guarded the point where the gorge opened into the valley. He moved with a firm step and a fearless countenance, and offered his hand. They gave a sharp cry of recognition, followed by a gentle grunt and a cordial shake of the hand. A phrase introduced me to them, and I, too, received my shake of the hand. One of them went with us to introduce us to the village. The chiefs and warriors thronged around us. My companion explained our object in this visit. As far as I could judge our reception was cordial, and we were welcome. A vacant cabin, fitted up with Indian magnificence, and its floor spread with skins, was assigned us. There seemed to be almost a contest among them, who should be the first to entertain us.

I arose early the next morning to make a circuit of this lovely valley. At the extremity of the village a torrent poured down from a prodigious elevation, which seemed a sheet suspended in the air. It falls into a circular basin, paved with blue limestone of some rods in diameter.



The dash near at hand has a startling effect, but at a little distance, it is just the murmur to inspire repose, and it spreads a delicious coolness all around the place. Its banks are fringed with pawpaw, persimmon and catalpa shrubs and trees, interlaced with vines, under which the green carpet is rendered gay with flowers of every scent and hue. The coolness of the vale and the shade, together with the irrigation of the stream, covers the whole valley with verdure. The beautiful red bird with his crimson tufted crest, the nightingale pouring forth a continuous stream of sound, and the mocking-bird, the buffoon of songsters, parodying the songs of all the rest, had commenced their morning voluntary. The sun, which had burnished all the tops of the mountains with gold, and here and there had glistened on banks of snow for some time, would not shine in the valley until he had almost reached his meridian height. The natives, fleet as the deer when on an expedition abroad, and at home lazy and yawning, were just issuing from their cabins, and stretching their limbs in the cool morning air. The smoke of the cabin fires had just begun to undulate and whiten in horizontal pillows athwart the valley. The distant roar of the cascade seemed to mingle and harmonize all other sounds in the valley. It was a charming assemblage of strong contrasts, rocky and inaccessible mountains, the deep and incessant roar of the cascade, a valley that seemed to sleep between these impregnable ramparts of nature, a little region of landscape surrounded by black and ragged cliffs, on every side dotted thick with brilliant and beautiful vegetation, and fragrant with hundreds of plants in full bloom; in the midst of a lazy, simple and indescribable people, whose forefathers had been born and died here for uncounted generations; a people, who could have recorded

wars, loves and all the changes of fortune, if they had had their historians. Such was this valley of the Comanches.

There are places where I am at home at once wiith nature, and where she seems to take me to her bosom with all the fondness of a mother. I forget that I am a stranger in a strange land; and this was one of those places.

*"Here would I live, unnoticed and unknown,  
Here unlamented would I die;  
Steal from the world, and not a stone  
Tell where I lie."*

Having sauntered about in different parts of the valley for an hour, one spot struck me as peculiarly inviting to meditation, study and repose. It was a peninsula made by a bend in the stream, which almost curved back upon its own course, leaving an entrance scarcely three paces across, and the islet included an area of several rods. Even the Indians had a taste for the pleasantness of this place, for their devious paths had chequered out walks in the living turf. Even the Indian girls felt that here was the place to own their "dusky lovers." Weeping willows and magnolias rendered it a perfect alcove. Here, thought I, shall be my study, while I reside in this sweet place. When I cast my eye around I applauded that forecast, which had drawn so much ridicule from my companions, in having brought with me my books.

After breakfast a council fire was kindled in the public wigwam. The council chiefs, the warriors, the women and the children assembled around the council fire to welcome us to the village with the customary solemnities. The calumet went round. The savages all smoked, and gave it to us to smoke. A speech of welcome to us, and of

invitation to our partners to visit them was uttered by the most aged council chief. The elocution was strong, significant, and emphatic; and at the close of each sentence the interpreter, a half-blood Frenchman, translated it into French, a language which we both understood. I felt thankful that, among other useful acquirements at college, I had mastered this language. I entered into this speech with intense interest, for I had heard much of Indian eloquence. In the name of the tribe the usual promises of hospitality and protection were promised; in return we were to furnish them with a suitable portion of beads, knives, looking glasses and vermilion. On these terms I was to be considered as under the special protection of the tribe for two months, and my companion was to have every facility for purchasing and noosing horses and mules.

The council terminated with a religious ceremony, the chief actor being an old, tall, meager savage. His eyes sunk, bald headed except a small lock of dirty gray hair on the top of his head. He was the priest, physician and conjuror of the tribe. It was understood that we were to pay for his prayer in whiskey and tobacco.

Then came the dancing, after which it was understood that we were medicined, charmed or under the pledged protection of the household divinities.

The tribe of Comanches, of which this was the chief town, inhabited the valleys at the sources of the Red, Arkansas, and the Rio Grande rivers, which all rise near each other. These were their winter and permanent headquarters. In the summer they encamped and hunted the buffalo and other game, on the adjacent plains. To diversify their mode of life a little, they often made incursions into New Spain, sometimes for a kind of forced traffic in horses, mules, and pelts, but much oftener with the avowed purpose of war and plunder. They kept up



in this way a kind of border warfare with the Spaniards, sometimes practicing open hostilities, but generally maintaining a kind of armed neutrality, throwing their weight into the scale of the Apaches, a neighboring tribe of savages, with whom the Spaniards maintained a continual war, or of the Spaniards themselves, as their interest, their policy, or their ambition dictated. Their present relation with the Spaniards was a kind of hollow truce, which had not, however, prevented a recent excursion to Santa Fé with a select force of young warriors, in which they had brought off rich plunder, a number of captives of the lower order, and with them the only daughter of Conde Olmedo, Governor of Durango, and Superintendent General of the Mexican mines. A deputation from the tribe was now at Santa Fé to treat with the governor for the ransom of his daughter, which they put at an exorbitant sum of money, proportioned to the vast wealth of the father, and the known affection of his daughter. This circumstance showed more than any other, that they held the Spaniards at entire defiance. Circumstances, which will explain themselves as I proceed, will show why they felt such a peculiar confidence at this point of time. The governor, with all his resources, power and thousands of tenants, appeared to think of no other way of regaining his daughter but by a ransom. The savages spoke of her with a kind of mysterious reverence, remarking that she was never seen abroad, sometimes designating her with the sacred name of "medicine," and at other times by the name of a flower, which is the garnish of Indian figure for whatever they deem most beautiful. This valley, which contained the chief town and the central position of the tribe, evinced no little wisdom in those who selected it as a place of residence. The fortifications of Gibraltar are works of mere gingerbread compared with these inac-



cessible and everlasting battlements of nature. A gorge, or defile, of two miles in length, just wide enough to admit a single horse, and walled in by overhanging mountains of slate and granite, barred all approach, except of a single person at a time. A cabin, constructed rudely, but with great strength of massive rocks, and inhabited by select warriors, the most trustworthy of the tribe, was built at the point where the gorge opens into the valley, and every one who entered must pass through this cabin and by these warriors. So situated and so guarded it might be considered, as they considered it, impregnable to any force which, in the present fermenting and distracted state of the Spanish provinces, they could bring against it.

The Comanches bear a general resemblance to the rest of the North American Indians. Inhabiting a healthful and temperate climate, living in constant abundance from their inexhaustible supplies of game, and having vast herds of cattle, horses and mules, and constantly exercising in the open air, they attain the most perfect development of the human form. They are of fine person, large, muscular and athletic. They are courageous, fierce and independent, knowing no law but their own proud wills. I saw manifest proof of their having put the Spaniards under frequent and heavy contributions. For, besides that their trade with the Americans supplied them with rifles and yagers, they had levied from the Spaniards carbines, powder and lead; and quantities of bullion, silver, gold and massive plate appeared in the cabins of the principal war chiefs. There were also cumbrous articles of mahogany furniture, splendid dresses and trappings, and crosses of gold, decked with gems, among them. The Creole captives from the Spaniards were retained as slaves. Some of them were intermarried among the savages, and there were a number of children of this mixed race. I had every

chance to study this singular people, for my companion was so constantly and laboriously employed in collecting horses, mules, pelts and silver, that he left me continually alone among a people of whose language I knew not a word.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE CAPTIVE.

THE stranger's cabin, which I occupied, was superintended by Osuna, a young, stout, finely formed squaw. She was active, assiduous and shrewd. She knew everything that was passing in the village, especially as regarded the younger members of it. From advancement which I made in her good graces, I drew presages of havoc which I was afterward to make among the hearts in this region. She was, of course, often with me. She delighted to teach me her language, and she made at least as rapid progress in learning mine. It was some time before my vanity had made the discovery that I was subduing the heart of this fierce damsel. I was at first rather astonished at the assiduity with which she waited on me, and the rapidity with which she mastered words and sentences in my language. She did not long leave me in doubt about the real motive of her diligence. It became palpable to me, and, notwithstanding she practiced some awkward attempts at concealment, to all the tribe that she viewed me with eyes of partiality. I soon found myself involved in a difficulty from this quarter. If I could manage this regard without either affront or too much encouragement it would assure me attention, an excellent teacher and the most accurate intelligence. If I affronted her with

a direct rejection of her kindnesses I would secure her everlasting ill will. She was the daughter of the second council chief, and of so much importance as to have recently been on the brink of marriage with Watook, the young, fierce, and principal war chief, who annulled the engagement without assigning any reason. It was clear that she entertained deadly revenge toward him, and no little jealousy for the young and beautiful Spanish captive in his keeping. She attributing the breaking off of her marriage with Watook to his growing love for his fair charge, and had no backwardness to do an ill office for both, if occasion offered.

I saw at once that it would require no little management to preserve the right medium in my intercourse with this tender virago, so as to commit myself to no party. It was but a few days before this apt pupil and myself had enough words in common in our two languages, in which to make me acquainted with many of the secrets and interior history of the tribe. I began with much caution to hint some curiosity about the Spanish captive, for whom I began to feel an interest. However indirectly I approached that subject, Osuna would instantly prove that she was a lineal descendant from Eve. She drew up at once, manifested temper, and only let me know that this proud daughter of the white people was a "medicine," and then was sullenly silent upon the subject.

In other respects I was delighted with my abode. I botanized, read, walked and inhaled the ambrosial atmosphere, and studied the natives. I spent the greater part of every day in the cool peninsula under the shade of the catalpas. Here were my books, and material for writing and drawing. I had erected a sod seat, and rude shelves and a table, and gave in to my dreaming existence in ample style. I made daily progress in becoming acquainted with the people, and my way of amusing myself, so entirely



different from theirs, seemed rather to render me an object of curiosity and to propitiate their good will. The only unpleasant circumstances of my condition were the inability to learn anything about the captive, who dwelt within a hundred paces of me, except enough to stimulate a vexatious curiosity. The captive was retained in studied seclusion in the cabin of the mother of Watook, and was seen by no other man, and by him only by day and in the presence of his mother. I was sufficiently warned that for me to attempt to enter that cabin would have given mortal offence. Apart from the restraint which savage customs generally impose upon intercourse with women, the high rank, and probably the personal beauty, and, more than all, the exorbitant ransom demanded for her, dictated this mystery and forbearance in relation to this captive.

In this way elapsed my first week, and I was beginning to feel myself domesticated in the valley. On the seventh morning of my residence there I repaired to my accustomed haunt, and was both surprised and delighted to see it occupied by a young and beautiful lady. The first glance showed me that here all my fairy dreams were out; and all my imaginations of the beau ideal were here actually before me. To exempt me from the charge of enthusiasm and extravagance, it will be only necessary to consider the circumstances of this meeting. An ordinary young woman, so situated, would probably have seemed an approach toward angelic beauty and excellence. I had seen all women in my own country with equal indifference, but one. That was the youngest daughter of our minister. I confess that her black eyes, ruddy cheeks and curling locks had given me a few transient pangs, which I passed off at the time as attacks of heartburn, and for which chalk and magnesia are prescribed. Judge, then, what passed

within me when I saw my seat occupied by a vision, as fair as the poet's dream; a very young lady, whom my imagination had pictured as disheveled, subdued, the image of terror and despair, sitting rather stately and erect, with buoyant hope and spirit in her eye, and self-estimation and command impressed upon her whole person. I am naturally awkward at description of this sort, but I will attempt to convey some idea of my first impression. She seemed not more than sixteen, but tall, finely formed, with an Italian face, an almost imperceptible shade of olive softening the glow of health and freshness in her cheek; eyes of that black and lustrous brilliancy that so struck Lord Byron, as the peculiar trait of a fine Spanish woman.

Raven locks curled luxuriantly upon a head moulded in the finest form for intelligence. The effect of her condition seemed to have produced a cast of melancholy, with which native dignity and youthful vivacity maintained a constant struggle. Her costume was, according to my impressions from reading, European Spanish—the most striking part of it a velvet mantilla, with a belt sparkling with gems—and for the rest it appeared a riding dress; the whole wearing an air of splendor and fête unaccountable in her condition upon any other supposition than, what I afterward learned was the fact, that it was the very dress in which she was taken on horseback and conveyed here as a prisoner.

So complete was the screen of verdure in my alcove that I was within four paces of her before I saw that my seat was occupied. Astonishment arrested my steps, and I must have looked particularly foolish. I bowed low; my cheeks burned, and I was awkwardly retiring. She partly arose, slightly inclined her head, and, in a manner in which native pride and confusion contended, asked me in French, "Pourquoi fuyiez-vous?" I turned, and stammered some-

thing in the same language about my unwillingness to interrupt or disturb her. "But," she answered, "you do not interrupt me. I came here expressly to meet you. Stranger! I have but a moment with you. The rules of my captivity and the cruel circumstance of my confinement allow me very seldom to go abroad. This is one of the times allowed. It is precious, and I must make the most of it. I have done you the justice to suppose that you could enter into my situation, and that you would at once comprehend that it excludes observance and forms of society, which should be so inviolable under other circumstances. Your honor and your pity will alike prevent you from thinking me forward, or acting unworthily, when I tell you I have inquired about you and sought this meeting. Your companion is generally away, and you are the only being in this valley to whom I could have a thought of appealing under my deplorable circumstances, for protection. Upon inquiry of Osuna about you, I made so much from her information as to assure myself that you were not a man of the rough and common mould. I am an unhappy captive, torn from a father and mother inexpressibly dear, and who have no other child. I had been on an invited party to the house of a friend of my father, who resides two leagues from Santa Fé. I was returning in the evening in the midst of my servants. In a moment we were surrounded by these ruthless savages. A few shots were fired upon us, and my servants and the gentleman who accompanied me dispersed in different directions. They seized the bridle of my horse and surrounded me with their warriors. Resistance and cries were equally unavailing. They brought me to this valley. I have been confined in this prison six weeks, which, under other circumstances, would have been so delightful. The chief, who headed the party that took me, is called Watook.



The tribe understand the value of their prize. They placed me under the protection of his mother, and I have been treated with consideration. A few days since I made an effort to escape, was apprehended and brought back. Since that the visits of Watook have been more frequent and his manner has been less restrained. There is something terrible to me in his regards and his whole deportment. Think, sir, that this fierce and horrible being expresses to me, in his way, that he loves me." As she said this she crossed herself, half kneeled and looked toward the sky for a few moments, seemingly engaged in intense devotion. Her flashing eyes were dimmed with tears. She slowly regained her composure, and resumed as follows: "My only comfort now is that you are here and that this dreaded being is absent. He went with a deputation from the tribe to Santa Fé to treat with my father concerning my ransom. The deputation should have arrived two days since. I should have trusted to this mode of deliverance, and should not have troubled you with my story; but, from the frequent visits of Watook before he started, from his mother, my keeper, and, more than all, from Osuna, I gather that something secret and terrible is about to befall me. Sleep flies from me. I sit at the little opening in the place where I sleep and strain my vision in the direction in which the deputation should arrive. And yet I have a horrible presentiment that if it should arrive with the price of my ransom I am not to be liberated. Dear, dear parents! Pitying mother of Jesus! And you, kind stranger, aid me in this extreme distress." A burst of irrepressible grief here cut short her communication for some time.

After this pause she seemed to struggle for composure, as she brushed away the fresh starting tears. "Stranger! you are of our race. You are instructed and must be a



man of humanity. Surely my confidence in you cannot be misplaced. Should it appear, after the arrival of the deputation, that I am not to be set at liberty, or in any event, if I am to be persecuted by that being, I put everything dear into your hands, and appeal to you to aid me to escape to my parents. Whatever motives detain one of your pursuits in this place, they could not but operate to induce you to such an act of honor and humanity; and there is nothing of reward or gratitude that such an act would not claim from my parents."

She paused, as if for my reply. You cannot doubt what reply I would have made to any woman under such circumstances. Add that this was the very scene for the visions of romance, and that this lovely girl, in such extreme distress, seemed more interesting, the more closely I considered her; that she threw herself with a simple and dignified confidence, which circumstances seemed so well to justify, upon my honor and protection; that I would have been stupid and unfeeling not to have been ample in protestations of aid and protection to the utmost extent of my power. I have a surmise that I was rather eager and eloquent in advancing these pledges; for, as I made them, a transient blush succeeded to the paleness of her previous distress.

There was earnestness and sweetness in her mode of thanking me. "And now," she continued, "to the manner of aiding me, I take you at your word. You will place it to anxiety about inventing the means of this escape, that I have learned that Osuna, so influential among the young warriors, loves you; and we are both pursued by these savage fires. I will not trifle with you by supposing that such a regard from such a person could have any influence with you. She, in her turn, is beloved by the warrior who commands the entrance to the valley

and who arrested me in my attempt to escape. You will easily account for the interest with which I have studied into this secret history. Calculate and manage rightly and your influence upon these two persons will furnish me the means of escape. Through the warrior the egress from this valley may be left unguarded. Through Osuna this may be obtained of him, and horses may be in readiness, and we may fly, I from a condition worse than death, and to a family of which I am the only hope; and you, to a compensation exceeding my ransom, if wealth be your object here; and, if I have rightly interpreted your character, to the applause of your own heart, a still higher compensation."

You may be sure that I disavowed mercenary views, for, in fact, I had none. Motives of another sort thrilled through me and I was again voluble, if not eloquent, even in French. Having exhausted all I had to say in the way of promise, I entreated that she would so far confide in me as to meet me often, until the means of escape could be devised. To this she replied: "That nothing but the emergency of the case would have justified advances like the present. Future interviews could not further the means of escape. Were they proper in themselves they would be observed and excite jealousy, and retard the object in view." She earnestly requested me to think of her case with compassion, and that if any chance offered to aid her, Osuna would inform her; for, that she suspected that Osuna was jealous of her supposed influence with Watook, her former lover, and that very circumstance, she hoped, would induce her to communicate any intelligence, or aid any plan, that might facilitate her escape. "But, you see, stranger, that I can have no object in future interviews, except so far as they might aid in our escape. They would be useless to you and

unbecoming to me. Remember me. All is confided in your prudence." Saying this she arose and retired.

I had matter enough now for thought, and no further need of an imaginary Laura. One simple thought took possession of my mind, and that was to devise ways and means by which this interesting captive might fly from her captors.

In the evening I had an interview of a very different character and interest. Osuna lingered after supper, and I saw clearly that I must prepare myself for an explanation. In fact she let me know, without circumlocution, that the honor that she intended me was nothing more than to offer me all her wealth, consisting of a large quantity of vermilion, a complete assortment of Indian finery, a rifle, yager, dogs, mules, horses, cows and silver; and all this only with the incumbrance of a fine athletic squaw, with broad copper colored cheeks, painted as red as vermilion could make them. She gave me to understand that her husband would be entitled to the same rank as her father. Her offer was in English, and was a curiosity of its kind, and ran nearly in this form: "You silly. You weak. You baby hands. No catch horse. No kill buffalo. No good, but for sit still read book. Never mind. Me like. Me make rich. Me make big man. Me your squaw." The caution of the fair captive, to turn the affection of this tender heroine to account struck me with force. I knew too little of the workings of the savage heart to judge exactly the medium I ought to pursue. I made up my reply, however, on the presumption of her descent from our common mother, and said every civil thing that I could, particularly thanking her for her good opinion of me and my unworthiness of such a prize. I begged her to wait on me until I should have learned something more of their ways, and render myself more worthy of



the honor by performing some exploit. The idea of waiting struck her unpleasantly, but the unction of soothing words anointed the sore. She continued to hang around me and to deal out to me the little stories and gossip of the tribe. I endeavored, with as much address as I could command, to turn the conversation upon the subject of the Spanish captive, and to draw from her what she knew about the final views of Watook, in regard to her ransom and liberation. A flash of indignation and fierceness kindled in her eye, and she eagerly replied: "You bad. You same like Watook. She white. You love. Never mind; she no love back. Her father big man, rich, no like your people. You no believe great spirit. Never mind. Me hate Watook bad. Me glad she go away. Nobody love Osuna. She here." This was just the string I wished to harp. I told her, as well as I could explain myself, that I pitied the poor captive greatly; that, like her, I wished to see her away and to know that she was among her friends; that, in wishing this I was influenced by no motive but compassion, and that she could do nothing for me for which I should be so thankful, as to give me any information about her, or any assistance in attempting to enable her to escape. I imperceptibly approached my wishes with respect to her interference with the warrior who commanded the approach to the valley; that through her he might be gained to allow the captive to escape. I told her that, of course, I expected all this to be a profound secret. "Yes. Me love," she replied; "me no tell. Me tell Watook kill you." But her notions of fidelity to the tribe were of the most trusty and highminded cast. She would not contemplate the idea of tempting the sentinel to desert, though she took care to let me know that she did not doubt her influence with him to that point. I then informed her that I had seen the captive, and that she



had apprehensions that Watook was not in good faith in regard to her ransom. She answered, as it appeared, with entire confidence, that Watook was a bad man, with great power, but that he would not dare to injure a person under the sacred protection of the tribe; and that all the members had too great an interest in their share of the ransom to allow him to think of any dangerous practice upon her. She promised, however, that she would watch every motion of Watook, and give me certain and timely intelligence if there should be any real ground for apprehension.

Though disappointed in my attempt to influence Osuna to furnish the direct means of escape, I flattered myself that at another time her heart or passions might be so moved as to bring it about. I spent the remainder of the day in painful efforts to imagine some other means of her escape. All my inventions were heavy, or attended with some insuperable difficulty. I wandered to the pass and conversed with the sentinel, using all the words that I knew, and striving to win his confidence. I gained all the information that I could glean from him respecting the road from that point to Santa Fé. I returned and sauntered around the cabin, where the captive, who occupied all my thoughts, was concealed. Access was forbidden; but there were no barriers to the imagination, and I busied myself in supposing her position, and her thoughts, under the covert of this rude tenement, and I made most fervent vows that no effort should be wanting to free this mistress of my thoughts.

As the sun began to decline I heard a shout, apparently of joy, in the direction of the pass. It was echoed back again by the whole tribe. The old men, warriors, women and children set up such piercing yells of joy as none can imagine but those who have heard. Thirty warriors,

with Watook at their head, accompanied by a Spanish officer and six soldiers, came riding up the valley toward the village. Osuna told me it was the return of the deputation from Santa Fé; that they had stipulated the ransom of the captive, and that she was to depart the next morning under the guard of the Spanish officer and soldiers.

I had been painfully engaged in straining my thoughts to devise the means of her liberation. It appeared that she was now likely to be liberated without any effort of mine. I confess that I felt a selfish feeling of regret that there was no chance of my having any agency in the business. The Spanish officer spoke French. I introduced myself to him, and he courteously detailed to me all the circumstances of the ransom. From him I learned the name of the captive. She was called Doña Isabel Hualpa de Olmedo. Her father had been on a visit to Santa Fé, to quell the dawning spirit of insurrection in the province, of which that place is the capital. He spoke with great feeling of the beauty and accomplishments of the lovely captive, and the desolation of her parents at her loss, adding, that immediately on regaining his daughter, having succeeded in the object of his visit, he should set out with her for their home in Durango.

Here, then, was the vanishing of all my fairy visions. A single interview, extorted only by the extreme pressure of her condition, was no grounds on which to seek an introduction to her father, even if I accompanied the escort on its return with her, as the Spanish officer invited me to do. None but voluntary engagements detained me here, and I painfully felt that when she should be gone my interest in the valley would be at an end. The pleasure of contemplating beautiful scenery is soothing, without much excitement, and fades at once before the higher excitements of the feelings of the heart. But, on what

pretext could I follow her? Certainly not on the slight ground of one casual meeting, where circumstances compelled her to make me her confidant, in want of all others. The thought of never seeing the fair prisoner again was a bitter one. While I was thus "chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy," my cabin door opened and the tall and fierce figure of Osuna was before me. It was not the time for her coming to discharge her usual functions. I was aware that she must have communications which she deemed important, and I waited in breathless impatience to hear what she had to say. She first made a motion to enjoy secrecy, adding the emphatic word, "Hush! You tell, me die, you die." I promised to be silent as death. In her laconic dialect, which only gave the leading words, and leaving all the rest to be supplied by looks and gesture, she informed me that the warrior who guarded the pass, her lover, had just been telling her that Watook was a bad and treacherous warrior who meditated the basest treason against the tribe; which was no other than to run away with all the money which was the ransom of the captive, which had been entrusted to his care, and to carry her off with it that night, and fly to the Apaches, a numerous and fierce tribe of savages, then at open war with the Spaniards. He proposed to offer himself as a warrior, to forever renounce the Comanches and wished to join himself to them. Such elopements from one tribe to another were common; and a warrior with such high fame as Watook, with so much money in his hands, could have no doubt of his reception among them. Watook proposed to her lover to leave the pass unguarded, and to accompany his flight, with the promise of one-half of the ransom as a bribe. The sum was thirty thousand *pesos* in gold, an immense bribe. "But," said she, "he no white like you, but he good. He



no run off to Apaches." He had not, however, been blind to a motive among savages the most powerful of all, that if Watook were away he would become the head war chief of the tribe. All chances, too, he would renew his claims upon Osuna, on which score her lover had jealous fears, would be obviated. With these views, although he would not consent to fly to the Apaches, for half the ransom, he had stipulated to allow Watook to escape with the captive, and had invented a plausible story, which would account for the escape without implicating himself. She closed by saying: "Me glad white woman go. Me glad Watook go. Me good. Me tell all. Me your squaw now."



## CHAPTER V.

## THE RESCUE.

THE moment I received this intelligence it confirmed the ground of the apprehension of the captive. I was impatient to get rid of Osuna, who still lingered about me expecting some remarks of regard, proportioned to the importance of her communication. I imagined a pretext, and sent her away on it. As soon as I was alone a confusion of thoughts came into my mind. What was to be done? I could make no communications to the Spanish officer, nor to the chiefs without committing Osuna, and violating the most solemn promise of secrecy. Besides, her deliverance, on which I was determined, was a thing in which I wished for no coadjutors. I wished to achieve the exploit unaided and alone. My resolutions and my plans were quickly formed. I had been simply a student, and all my pursuits and habits had disqualified me for enterprises of the sort I meditated. But I never felt the least lack of personal courage. I was muscular and nimble in an unusual degree. I was in perfect health, and had at command a spirited horse and a complete equipment of arms. I placed this lovely girl, in all the beauty of her interview with me, full before my eyes. I imagined the agony and despair of the helpless victim completely in the power of the lawless and brutal savage. His powers were

indeed gigantic, but I much excelled him in agility. I felt myself nerved to any point of daring, and there was not a particle of apprehension in my mind. As soon as the twilight disappeared I stole out to the little stable, where my horse was penned every night. I saddled him unobserved, and carried out my holster of pistols. I then returned, took my supper as usual, and dispatched Osuna from the cabin, complaining that I was ill and wished to retire early to rest. The moment she was gone I was out and mounted, and riding under the cover of the trees and shrubs to the entrance of the valley. Fortunately, it was a night peculiarly favorable to my purpose. It was sultry and thick with a smoky mist. Fleecy pillars of clouds were spread over the sky, that emitted frequent and brilliant flashes of lightning. I was situated in a thick shade, that entirely concealed both me and my horse, and yet so near the pass that when the sentinel moved I could see his whole figure by the lightning, and even its gleams upon his tomahawk. I waited in this position until nearly midnight, when I saw the sentinel move off in the direction of the village. Shortly after I heard the trampling of two horses, rapidly approaching the pass. The lightning still gleamed in the distance, and my heart palpitated so loudly that other sounds became indistinct to my ear. It was only a moment before I saw, by the lightning, the gigantic and terrible figure of Watook, and a female figure, apparently bound fast to her horse, and seemingly struggling to disengage herself and to speak. He had the bridle of her horse in his hand, and both horses disappeared beyond the cabin of the pass. My blood boiled, and the glow at my heart seemed to endow me with gigantic prowess. It occurred to me that it was prudent to follow them at such a distance, as neither to be seen nor heard. Accordingly I waited until I supposed they were half a mile in







advance. I then followed them, not meaning to overtake them, until they and myself were beyond the apprehension of any interference from the valley. I continued to ride on behind them, sometimes so near that by the diminishing flashes of the lightning I could barely distinguish their figures, and then falling back, through fear of being observed myself, until I judged we were ten miles from the valley. I there came upon a prairie, a level table plain, a little distance from the commencement of which I had learned, by previous information, that the roads parted, one leading in the direction of Santa Fé, and the other toward the country of the Apaches. Here I put my horse to his full speed and was soon near enough to be heard by Watook. He stopped, and, though the moon, struggling through the clouds, threw an uncertain light upon objects, I observed him fastening his horse, which he led to a small tree. I did the same. We both dismounted and cautiously approached each other in the darkness. At the distance of ten paces, he uttered a sharp, fierce cry of interrogation in Comanche and Spanish, asking who I was, and what I wanted? I had studied my reply, and made it in Comanche. "Leave your prisoner and be off."

I had scarcely pronounced the words before I received the shot of his carbine through my clothes, slightly grazing my shoulder, and in an instant his tomahawk whistled past my head. I made an unavailing shot with my yager, and before I could disengage my pistols from the holster, we were struggling together in deadly grasp, each aiming to dispatch the other with the dirk. I had once been the champion of the ring, but he lifted me from the ground and threw me to the earth. Though under him, I had the control of his arms, and held them fast. I comprehended that he was so much my superior in strength, that unless I availed myself of superior coolness and dexterity, he

would be sure to destroy me. His was the struggle of an infuriated demon, and my policy was to entangle his arms, and parry his efforts to draw his dirk until he should exhaust himself in putting forth his brute strength. I received several bruises, and felt his horrid teeth fixed in my arms and elsewhere, but I still held to the defensive, and let him struggle on. He somehow contrived to disengage his dirk from his bosom, and gave me a cut in the arm; but I soon had the satisfaction to discover that his strength was sinking in exhaustion, and that his efforts were growing weaker. I availed myself of a momentary slackening of his hold on me, and summoning my yet unwasted power, I threw him off, and was uppermost in my turn. In a moment he received my dirk in his bosom. He uttered the yell of a fury, and disengaged himself from me as if I had been but an infant. He made a deadly thrust, which, had I not parried, would have been fatal. As it was, I was severely wounded in the arm by which I warded off the thrust. This was his expiring effort. He fell with a convulsive sob, and was still.

I was covered with blood, both his and my own. I felt it trickling from my wounds, but equally felt that they were not mortal. I ran to the captive, who sat on her horse at a little distance from the combat. A handkerchief was so placed over her mouth that she was only able to utter hoarse and scarcely audible sounds of distress. I tore away the handkerchief, unbound her pinioned arms, cut away the rope by which she was bound to the horse, and made myself known to her. Her terror and the agony of her situation took from her for some moments the power to reply. I placed her gently on the grass, and made all the efforts that the case admitted, to calm her terrors and agitation; I made her comprehend the danger of pursuit from the valley, and that no time was

to be lost. Her first words were scarcely articulate thanks to the Virgin Mary for her deliverance, and her next were inquiries if I had received wounds in the affray. I answered that I was slightly wounded, but begged her to think of nothing but escape; and as soon as she was able, to mount her horse and fly toward Santa Fé. To be in preparation for the flight, I took the horse of the savage that I had slain, and brought him to mine. The horse was literally loaded with money. I apportioned *this* among the three horses, and encouraged the young lady to mount her horse again. She uttered earnest and vehement exclamations, indicating mingled terror and thankfulness, and promised to exert her best strength to fly. To mount and be off was the work of a moment, and I felt no compunction at leaving the wretch I had slain to the burial of the carrion vultures.

It was not long before my fair companion regained the power of speech, and a sufficient degree of composure to talk of her wonderful escape, and to find those artless, but powerful expressions of gratitude, which indicated at once strong feeling and a quick sense of delicacy and propriety. "I shudder to think of the condition," said she, "from which you have rescued me. Death were but a trifle, in comparison of what I had to apprehend. Oh! what words could describe what I felt, while you were engaged in the mortal struggle. I cannot imagine how you could have triumphed over such a terrible and gigantic enemy. Your voice is weak, and I much fear that you have deceived me as to the severity of your wounds." I endeavored to quiet her apprehensions by assuring her that my exertions and power of horsemanship would show her that I was not dangerously wounded; that for the rest, I waived all thanks if she would put her horse to his utmost speed, and render



the deliverance effectual by getting too far in advance of pursuit to be overtaken.

But, in truth, I felt weak and exhausted. I had, indeed, achieved a considerable victory, had won back an immense booty, had shown some daring, and had delivered a distressed damsel of exquisite beauty, and under circumstances which must call forth grateful feelings, and render me in her eye something of a hero. All these invigorating motives did not hinder nature from asserting her claims. I felt my exhaustion increase with every mile. I frequently and anxiously looked toward the regions of the morning. But it seemed, in my weakness and impatience, as though the sun had forgotten to rise. I trembled from the chill of the morning air, the pain of my wounds, and the apprehension of pursuit; and my companion discovered increasing fears about my wounds. Her apprehension rose to terror as the increasing twilight disclosed my whole dress covered with blood, and the paleness of my countenance.

At length the sun arose, and in his glory, from the rolling mists which curled above the mountains, down the green slopes of which we had been winding. At the distance of half a league below us on the plain, appeared a village, inhabited partly by Spaniards, and partly by civilized Indians. Their flat roofed and whitewashed dwellings resembled, in the distance, little square towers, and the smoke of their fires streamed aloft from the peaceful hamlet. I welcomed the prospect as the omen of repose and protection. Weak as I was, my heart exulted. Elysian prospects danced before my imagination. I had fabricated in fancy the last act of my drama, and the catastrophe was delightful. I turned to my fair companion. "Courage!" said I, "we are free. This is the first prospect that guarantees us against the danger of your being recap-



tured and carried back again. I have not dared to believe in the reality of your deliverance until now." She surveyed me as I was all stained with blood, and tears of tenderness and joy started in her eyes. "How much I fear," she replied, "that I have purchased this deliverance by suffering and sickness and danger to you! I tremble to see how pale you are."

We entered the village and were soon surrounded by a crowd of villagers, proposing to me and the young lady a thousand questions. She waved them to retire, and send for the village physician. I did not understand what she said, for she addressed them in Spanish. But I saw their grateful eyes turned upon me, and comprehended that they could not retire satisfied until she had given them the substance of our story. The authorities of the village attended us directly, and we were conducted with homage and observance to the little *meson*, and to the best apartment in it. Nothing could have been more opportune than this repose. I was almost fainting, before a mattress could be prepared. But I retained consciousness enough to observe that my fair companion betrayed as much alarm and sensibility, as vanity itself could desire. When the sapient personage came, who operated both as surgeon and physician, he pronounced that we were both equally faint and in danger; but that as the life of the Doña de Olmedo was of course much more important than mine, he proposed to commence his operations upon her. This observation brought back the color to her cheeks, and protesting that she was quite well, she insisted that he should immediately examine and dress my wounds. When he found that nothing could be done with her, he began on me. My wounds were examined, and the stains of blood washed away. He pronounced in a deep, oracular tone, and my companion interpreted to me, that if I were careful and

observed proper precaution, and took the necessary repose, I might probably do well; that my wounds were severe, if not dangerous; and that I could not, with safety, depart from under his hands for a considerable time.

Here commenced between me and the young lady a kind of contest, whose interest of the two should yield to the other. It was evidently dangerous for her to remain. This village was so near the Comanches, and they could easily send a force against it that would enable them to regain the captive, or at least the price of her ransom would be demanded. She certainly dreaded the thought of being in any way in their power again. This was an unanswerable argument why she should go on without delay. I, on my part, insisted on this, and assured her that all I wanted was breakfast and a glass of wine to be able to follow her. She, on the contrary, insisted that the physician must know best whether it was safe for me to proceed; that she apprehended no other danger from being pursued by the savages than being obliged to refund the ransom—a matter to which she attached no consequence: that, however anxious to return to her parents, no consideration could induce her to leave me in such a miserable place, and with such attendants, as long as there was any danger in the case; affirming that she should not depart until it was deemed safe for me to accompany her. I believe that the first gallant remark which I had ever made to any one, was, that she was placing temptations before me in such case, to affect to be sick, and thus prolong the stay. To this, she replied, slightly blushing, that there were no calls for remarks of that sort; that she proffered no more than the simplest offices of humanity; that my paleness sufficiently confirmed all that the physician had said; and that she knew her duty better, than

to leave one who had so nobly exposed himself, and so severely suffered for her sake, from selfish consideration.

“Well, then,” I replied, “if you are peremptory, so also will I be. I will have breakfast, and I will take a glass of wine, and then, if my strength admits, I will proceed on my way toward Santa Fé alone, if you will not accompany me. For I am perfectly aware that this doctor is a blockhead, and that all I need is refreshment. If I have exposed myself, and suffered, I will not consent that it shall all be unavailing, by allowing you to remain here until you are overtaken, and carried back to the valley.” So saying, I made signs to the host that I wanted wine and breakfast. A fowl and venison was soon placed before us, and a bottle of exquisite *parso*. I had to encounter the tender remonstrance of my companion, and the grave assurance of the physician, that such a course would prove my death. I ate, and drank, and was refreshed, and felt no other inconvenience than a certain degree of stiffness and soreness in my wounds, and weakness from the loss of blood. When she saw it was of no further use to remonstrate, the young lady took refreshments too. Our bills were discharged, and I assisted her on horseback, and mounted myself. The military company of the village was in attendance, offering any escort the village could furnish for guarding to her home so considerable a personage as the only daughter of Conde Olmedo. For my part, I felt happier, if not safer to be alone, and felt glad to hear her decline the proffered aid, wisely remarking that whatever force the savages should send against us, would have to pass by the village, and that they could make a more effective resistance there, than with us. The force that was offered us, had actually been collected and put in array, in less than the two hours that we stayed in the village. It was



sufficiently formidable in numbers, and, in appearance, not unlike the regiment of Falstaff. I did not doubt that they would all have scampered away in view of twenty Comanches. As it was, they accompanied us with great parade a league on our way.

I was refreshed and invigorated by the food and wine. Once more on horseback, and alone with my fair companion, my wounds, my recent peril, and all the past was forgotten, and the future opened upon me with all the rich coloring of hope. I contemplated nearer and with more intense interest, my companion, on whose fine countenance the buoyancy of youth, intelligence, and spirit were gleaming again. She admitted that the physician must have mistaken my case, for that I had regained the same countenance in which she had seen me at first. Her apprehensions on this score relieved, and her native flow of spirits returning, her conversation became frank and delightful. I was astonished at a display of talent and acquirements, premature in any place for so young a lady, and particularly unexpected from a young lady of that country, whose inhabitants in general, we have been taught to consider so uneducated. The prematurity of attainment might be accounted for, by the well-known fact, that the mind, as well as the form, of females is developed earlier in southern, than in northern countries. She informed me that she had been educated with great care, in a convent in Seville, in Old Spain, of which city her father was an ancient grandee. He had served with distinction in his early years, on the coast of Morocco against the Moors, and had sustained various offices and honors there. Just before the invasion of his country by Napoleon, he had been appointed to the high and lucrative trust which he now held in New Spain. Wisely foreseeing in the distance the approaching distrac-

tions of the mother country, he had renounced it forever as a home, and had, on receiving the appointment in question, transferred the proceeds of his immense fortune to the New World. He lived in dignified and stately retirement, near the seat of his government, Durango, in New Spain. It was not long since he had sent for his daughter.

At this point of her story her voice faltered. Her countenance was suffused with the crimson of consciousness, and she seemed to hesitate about proceeding any further in her narrative. But, apparently, a wish to prepare me for an acquaintance with her father's family by some previous knowledge of its situation and members, possibly some little interest in a young man who might be supposed to have some estimation in her mind, seemed to urge her on. She went on to observe, that on arriving at her father's house, she was introduced to a young gentleman, called Don De Oli Cabelle, son of a nobleman of Old Spain, who had been a compatriot and fellow-soldier with her father, and who now discharged a lucrative and important trust in Mexico. She instantly perceived that there were particular views in his being there, at the juncture of her arrival; that, for her part, she was ready to admit his prospects, rank, and dignity, but that he had always been unamiable in her view; that she might possibly come in time to esteem him as a friend, or a relative, but in any nearer connection, never; that she had expressed as much to her father, when he intimated his wish that she might look upon him with other feelings; that events were proceeding in this train at her father's house, until the preceding winter; that then her father had been compelled, by the duties of his office, to visit the frontier provinces, to quell the spirit of insurrection against the existing government; that she had accompanied her father, his family, and Don De Oli in their journey to

Santa Fé; and after having resided there for some time, she had been invited to the fatal party of her father's friend; and that, on returning from it, as had been related, she was captured by the Comanches. She recurred to the forebodings of which she had spoken to me in the valley. She perceived that Watook entertained for her, sentiments for which she had no other name than love; that he had insinuated in his way, how much more independent and happy the wife of a Comanche chief would be, than the wife of a cowardly Spaniard; that his mother often talked in the same strain, and began finally to intimate to her the necessity of making up her mind to receive Watook as a husband, and to be adopted in the tribe, as so many other captives were. To all this she had considered it the part of policy to make no reply. Up to this time she had trembled, indeed, to find herself a captive among them. Such stories were familiar to her ear. She had never supposed, for a moment, that anything worse was likely to come of it than a heavy ransom, which she well knew, would be no consideration with her father. For they made no secret that they detained her simply with a view to her ransom; that after Watook had arrived the preceding day with the Spanish guard, her suspicions of his intended treachery were first excited, by finding that the Spanish guard was not allowed to visit her. Watook pretended that all the preliminaries of the ransom were not yet settled; that, as soon as the evening came, she found herself watched, and not permitted to leave her cabin; that Watook then came in, and told her that he was a much greater man than her father; that the Spaniards were no better than squaws; that he determined to make her his squaw, as many of the tribe had Spanish squaws. That he knew how to love better than a pitiful white man; and that she should have plenty of servants, horses, money,



and vermilion, and want nothing, if she would go willingly with him among the Apaches. But that if she made any difficulty, he was not like a white skin, to be turned from his purpose, and that he would bind her fast, and carry her off by force. He then insisted on a direct answer. She watched an opportunity, and made an effort to get abroad and reveal his intended treachery, and claim the protection of the tribe; but Watook and his mother brought her back by force, and bound her, and placed a handkerchief over her face, as has been related; and that not far from midnight they had placed her on horseback, and bound her so firmly, that all her struggles to disengage herself had been unavailing.

Such was the brief story of her captivity. From this story she digressed to the history of her father's family. It was sufficiently obvious, amidst all the delicacy and circumspection of these details, that she counted upon me, for a while at least, as likely to become a member of her father's house, and that she wished me to have a full view of the ground before me, with the benevolent wish, that understanding the different characters, I might calculate best how to propitiate them. She spoke of her father as honorable, highminded, and ambitious, loving her more than anything else, except power, but flexible and unsteady in his purpose. In her eulogy of her mother, she was unsparing and unqualified. She represented her as educated, gifted, gentle, and affectionate in the extreme, and receiving from her the entireness of filial affection. In speaking of the father confessor, her views of sanctity of his office forbade her from describing him in terms of reprehension. But I could perceive that she wished to put me on my guard against him. It was clear, too, that in her account of her admirer, more was meant than what met the ear, and that she wished me to see that it was

out of the question for me to think of anything beyond the claims of simple gratitude; and to caution me against entertaining any aspiring views in my own case. At least she wished me to take a full and entire survey of the premises, and all the rocks and quicksands, that I might know how to steer my little skiff among them. For the rest, with a great deal of spirit and vivacity, she was all truth and simplicity. There was a laconic force in her expressions, and a delightful Spanish accent in her French, which rendered her conversation singularly interesting. I was flattered by the pains which she took to enable me to understand the bearings of things in her father's home, and notwithstanding I had requested her to recur no more to the subject of obligations to me, and though she wished to avoid the theme, artless expressions of gratitude, and anxiety that I might find it consistent to fix myself in her father's family, escaped her in spite of herself. I will fairly confess to you that I did not at all regret my loss of blood, nor the anguish of my wounds, which received such amiable and considerate sympathy. I was a young man, and, to avail myself of the old Latin saw, you would expect nothing of me beyond my age and feelings. It was to me a most delightful journey, and, from the kindling brightness of her eye, and the growing frankness of her conversation, I had reason to believe not unpleasant to her. She listened with the most flattering attention to my short recital of the passage of my history up to the present time, and seemed as much astonished at the possibility of such an education as mine being obtained in the States, as I had been that she should have been so well instructed in New Spain. She informed me that a thought occurred to her of an employment, as she judged, suited to my character and pursuits, that would offer in her father's family, which she thought might induce me

to settle there. She did not name it, but stated that she would suggest it to her father, and hoped that through him it would be offered and made acceptable to me.

In these conversations, and in occasional stops at *mesons*, the time passed rapidly. As soon as we were free from the fear of pursuit, I could have wished the distance to Santa Fé twice as great as it was. The country was delightfully interesting, and every prospect brightened in my eye. The people all seemed good, obliging, and happy. I had not been much used to the society of ladies, but I used every effort in this case to stand on my best. Either joy exalted my imagination, or the country was more beautiful, and the scenery more inspiring than any I had seen, or the slight fever of my wounds created a fermenting excitement in my brain. Be the cause what it might, I felt myself a new man in point of eloquence. I smiled internally at my own volubility. Everything seemed to suggest thoughts and words to me. I was thorough in my French, but had never been in the habit of speaking it. It appeared as if the occasion had transformed me into a Parisian. I noticed more than once, that my energy of language and fluency of expression brought a smile into her face, in which there seemed to be a kind of arch consciousness.

Everything on the earth, both joy and sorrow, have their turn, and this journey was too pleasant to last long. The evening of the third day was drawing on, when, in the direction of the setting sun, we saw the glittering of the towers of Santa Fé. A peasant had been sent in advance to advise the Conde of the approach of his daughter. "Yonder," said she, turning her melting and thankful eyes to heaven, "is the house where reside my dear parents. What words could convey the emotion of my heart, as I return to them? And what do they and I owe to you, gen-



erous deliverer? The chill of death must be on this heart, before it forgets its obligations." Saying this she clasped her hands and seemed to be devoutly occupied in thanksgiving until we entered the city. We were apprised that the news of her deliverance and return had been spread, for we entered amidst the ringing of bells, firing of cannon, and great rejoicing by the whole population, who poured into the streets and crowded around us. She was nearly stifled with kisses and embraces, for we had dismounted, and our horses were led through the city. We were conducted to the palace which the Conde occupied as a temporary residence. Around the court was paraded all the military of the town and vicinity, in sufficient numbers, it seemed to me, to have blotted out the whole Comanche nation, and obtained the release of the captive by force.

At the gate that opened into the court of the palace appeared the Conde, surrounded by his officers. He was a stout, venerable looking man; enveloped in a flowing Spanish cloak, a broad, drooping hat with white plumes, and armed with a sword. His countenance was noble, but stern. His appearance strongly called up the remembrance of prints of the Spanish in the times of Charles V. As soon as the father and daughter saw each other the state of the grandee gave place to the tenderness of the father. It was one of those meetings which the imagination can paint. At the door of the palace the daughter exchanged the arms of the father for those of the mother, and the raptures, tears, and sobbings were from a motive the direct opposite of that which caused the lamentation heard in Ramah. I had never witnessed such a scene, nor such a cause for rejoicing. Domestics, Indians, negroes, old and young, crowded around the restored daughter. No other language has so many terms

of fondness as the Spanish, and this occasion seemed to exhaust them. After the salutations of the family, she received those of the tall, whiskered, and stately Don De Oli, who appeared to eye me from the first moment with lowering looks of distrust. Then she was welcomed home by the duenna, and last of all by the father confessor.

Some minutes elapsed before there was sufficient composure for my introduction. I was then introduced by the daughter to her parents, with a concise, but energetic statement of what I had done, and of her obligations, in French. I went through this introduction with more confidence and composure than I had expected. The speaking and encouraging countenance of the daughter followed me through it; and it was sufficiently visible to me, that she wished me to make a favorable impression. The Spanish are known for the strength and earnestness of their feelings when a great occasion excites them. I could not have wished for more praise and gratitude than I received from all. I was the hero of the hour. Deep and unaffected concern was manifested about my wounds and paleness. They forgot all about my country and religion in the excitement of the moment. It was a full hour before the restored daughter had told enough of her story, and endured enough caresses to be allowed to sit down in quiet. We were then seated to chocolate and supper. The daughter was seated between the father and mother, with a hand in the hand of each. On one side was the father confessor, and on the other Don De Oli. So seated, she gave a brief narrative of her captivity and release in Spanish, and so loud and distinct, that the assembled family could hear. At every turn in her story, although I could not comprehend the language, I could easily discern, by the grateful eyes of the hearers turned upon me, that I had my full meed of praise. If I

ever saw cause for envy, it was the feelings of the parents and the child on this joyous occasion. From the supper table we were ushered into the chapel. It was hung with black, decorated with religious paintings, and lighted with waxen tapers. The daughter turned upon me an imploring look, the purport of which I understood to be, to go as far as I could in imitating the rest. High mass was celebrated by the father confessor with great solemnity, and a *Te Deum* performed on the organ. My views of religious obligation, and my principles, allowed me to go certain, but not all lengths, in joining in the ceremonies of their church. A single look from the daughter, as I came from the chapel, told me that, in her judgment, I had kept the right medium in this observance.

I retired for rest, but, much as I needed repose, not to sleep. The adventures of the last three days had crowded upon me too rapidly to allow my mind easily to return to its natural level of repose. Its agitation was that of the waves, just after the fury of the storm. I threw myself on the stately and downy couch assigned me, and wished the calm which sleep gives, before I took a view of my actual position, and attempt to arrange my plans for the future. But the more I courted sleep, the more tumultuously thoughts crowded upon me. The old question returned, "What doest thou, and what wilt thou do here?" A youth, from the land of undeviating industry and regular pursuits, in the wild regions west of the Mississippi, then among the savages, and soon after his hands red with the blood of a fellow creature, a knight errant, a deliverer of a beautiful and distressed damsel; and finally in the palace of a grandee of Spain among Catholics, a people of other manners, another language, and another religion. What have I to do here? On what pretext stay? Shall I accept a compensation which I have fairly won?



I came to this country with mixed motives, not distinctly known to myself; but to acquire an honest fortune was, undoubtedly, one of my hopes. Should I accept this compensation, and take my leave, will not a certain image be painfully present to my remembrances? At least there appears at present no assignable ground for my remaining here. Because I delivered the daughter, shall I fix myself on her family? What was the employment of which she spoke? And then, had she manifested any symptoms of flattering partiality for me? None at all. She had been simply grateful, and had taken pains to put an extinguisher upon any such idle notions, by letting me know that, by the family, at least, all the elements of such a calculation had been previously arranged and settled. To look upon all sides of all these subjects was employment enough for one night. I probably turned in my bed a hundred times, and revolved as many projects. I came in the end to no fixed resolution but this: I will follow the leading of circumstances. They shall see that a well principled, and well educated young man will never swerve, for a moment, from the conduct prompted by integrity and self-respect. If these will not allow me to remain here, I will join my company when they come here, and return to my own country. On this resolution I fell asleep. I am not sure of my dreams; but I think I fancied Doña Isabel telling her parents that I was much to be preferred to Don De Oli.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE CONDE'S PROPOSITION.

As soon as I was placed in a state of complete repose, I began to feel all my weakness and exhaustion. The next morning I found that my wounds were inflamed, and that I was laboring with fever. I arose and went below, but I painfully felt that I must remain here for some time at least, for the healing of my wounds, and the restoration of my exhausted strength. My increased paleness and indisposition drew from the family assembled in the morning for breakfast, expressions of apprehension and concern. It was insisted that I should put myself under the care of the family physician. The Condesa manifested a maternal interest in my case, and they drew from me a promise that I would confine myself to the house. Every member of the family, and all the strangers who had come in to congratulate the Conde on the arrival of his daughter, vied with each other in demonstrations of the most flattering regard. The family physician prescribed. My wounds were dressed anew. The chamber of my confinement was connected with the library. In it was a very considerable collection of books in French. The Conde, his lady, Don De Oli, and the daughter, whom I shall designate, as she was called in the family, Doña Isabel, were frequently with me, that I might not suffer from loneliness; and as all these spoke

French, I could at once enter into the pleasures of conversation. I was allowed every day to descend to the parlor, and then Isabel, and sometimes other young ladies amused me with songs, accompanied generally by the guitar. I sometimes saw one person among them looking upon me with an anxiety more flattering than all the rest. The conversations often turned upon the geography and history of Old Spain, and the revolution, which was then raging in all its fury. It was a natural transition from that to the physical and moral resources of the Spanish colonies in the New World; countries so vast and diversified, and such magnificence and sublime features of natural grandeur, that the very description of them is poetry. The Mexican Empire, they represented as richer in natural resources, than any other country; and they dwelt with gloomy forebodings upon its ulterior prospects. They asserted that the seeds of disorganization and rebellion were thickly sown over its whole surface, and they anticipated a terrible harvest, similar to that which was then reaping in Old Spain and in Spanish South America. It was obvious that they were all staunch royalists, and bitter enemies to every form of republican government. It may be supposed, that they could not be so ignorant of my country, and its present condition, as not to view it with no small portion of jealousy. They rightly appreciated its growing greatness, resources and power. And they evidently had a great dread of our disposition to spread our principles among their people. For the rest, they had been accustomed to consider us a nation of peddlers and sharpers, immoderately addicted to gain, and sordid to the last degree; that we were without models of noble and chivalrous feelings; in short, a kind of fierce and polished savages, whose laws and institutions were graduated solely with a view to gain. They expressed an earnest hope that a man, who



could have been reared, as they supposed, with no settled principles in morals, politics or religion, might, without abandoning preconceived opinions, be imbued with the dogmas of the Spanish régime and the Catholic Church, and become an adopted son of the country.

For a man to know the force of his patriotism, it is necessary that he should be in a foreign country, and hear his own villified. I felt the rising warmth, and was obliged to repress it, in order to answer with moderation and decorum. I said to them, that the less informed classes in our country thought of the Spanish, not precisely as they appeared to think of us, but, if possible, with more and deeper contempt; but that all the informed classes felt and appreciated the Spanish character. I was sorry to see the same prejudice here, which, in our country, existed only among the lowest of the people. "I am not going," I observed, "to answer and refute in detail all the charges which you have brought against us. It is true, in reply to the sweeping charge of avarice, that we are a money getting people; and, unfortunately for you, your country has taken an example of ours, only the people whose sole business abroad is to make money. These men, perhaps, carry the desire of acquisition to avarice and passion. But it is by no means, as you suppose, an universal trait. No country, according to its wealth, much less according to its age, has so many noble public and private charities. There is no country in which so much indulgence is shown to beggars, in which the poor have so much consideration, and whose regulations furnish them with so much comfort. Acts of private generosity are not so apt to be blazoned there, for the very reason that they are common, and that they who perform them feel that they are only acting in common with a multitude of others, and shrink from public applause. If you would know whether we

have the spirit of public munificence among us, you must see, as I have seen, our public buildings, and our works of public utility and comfort in our cities. To judge if we are a happy people, you must traverse, as I have done, the Union from one extreme to the other, and see everywhere the increasing comfort, knowledge and opulence of ten millions of people, among whom property, equal rights, comfortable existence, contentment, cheerfulness, and hope are, as I believe, more generally and plentifully diffused, than among any other people of the same number on the globe. You suppose that there are among us no pursuits but those dictated by avarice. If my books were here from the Comanche valley, I could read to you a thousand manifest proofs from our history to the contrary. I would refer you to the great mass of that very class of people that has given you such impressions of our sordidness and avarice, the sailors. The annals of no age or country can furnish a more general and striking contempt of money, and of everything but glory, a more entire disregard of every mean and sordid motive, and even of life itself, than the history of our marine in all our wars. There is no other country where a miser is regarded with more contempt, and a rich man, merely as such, with less respect. Nothing blasts the reputation sooner, than to be reputed the slave of avarice. We are reputed, beyond the seas, and by many of the bigoted and prejudiced of the parent country, to be destitute of all taste for the fine arts and literature, and even the dawning of patronage and literary munificence. As regards the first, I say nothing of the models in the fine arts, which are already collected in Philadelphia and the other cities. That we produce our full share of the materials of excellence in the fine arts, let the facts attest, that more than an equal proportion of the distinguished

British painters of the last age, and the promising geniuses of the present, were, and are natives of the United States. Literature receives in our country a more ample patronage than it does in any other country. As regards our growth in improvements in another point of view, the facilities of travel and communication, it would be invidious to compare our country with yours. But in this respect we may boldly challenge comparison with any country on the globe. Steamboats connect in easy, rapid and pleasant communication, a thousand leagues of our western waters. There are hundreds that traverse them in every direction. The streams, lakes, arms of the sea, and the different points along the Atlantic shore are all traversed by them. These boats, the canals, the public roads, the places of resort for amusement or health, present a moving mass of well-dressed, civil and apparently happy travelers. Compared with the leprous and the rabble of your cities, the whole population of the cities and the country with us would be deemed of the higher order. It is true, we have no nobility, no titled and privileged class. These things rest with us upon the base where nature, reason, common sense and wise arrangement have placed them, upon personal merit. But if you imagine we have no scale by which to estimate the difference between the wise and good, the ignorant and vile, you greatly mistake. The homage which we pay to talent, virtue and public service is heartfelt, and paid so much the more cheerfully, as it is not levied as a tax, and is very different from the forced observance which is awarded to the titled rank on the claims of prescription. In the presence of the father confessor it would, perhaps, be considered indecorous to compare our worship with yours. I will only say, that in the region where I was reared, it has been conceded, that a greater proportion of the people attend public worship as a habit,



than in any other country. Religion has more influence, fewer crimes are committed, and there are fewer public executions than elsewhere. In short, the whole country presents such a spectacle of order, quiet and peaceable industry, and regular advancement of every kind, as I firmly believe, is not to be seen in an equal degree in any other country. You should see before you condemn us. I regret to find among the highest and most intelligent here, the same prejudices and unfounded impressions, which only exist among us in the lower orders of our people."

The boldness and the hardihood of my harangue, if not its eloquence and truth, astonished them. If it did not produce conviction and a higher estimation of my country, it did not seem to diminish their respect for one, who dared so frankly to compare it with others. I thought I had produced an effect on the mother and her daughter. The Conde only remarked, that of the few inhabitants of the States that he had seen, they were all in the habit of vaunting their own country. The father confessor mused, made the sign of the cross, and left the room. It was evident from the expression of Don De Oli that he regarded me with disdain.

Nothing material occurred in my history for some days. My wounds were healing. My color and strength returned. I foresaw that ill health would soon serve me no longer as a pretext to stay in this family. As my health returned, I saw Doña Isabel less frequently, and there was a visible anxiety in her countenance. Don De Oli took no pains to disguise his haughtiness and dislike for me. As was natural, recurrence was often made to the deliverance of Doña Isabel. He invariably took occasion, speaking in Spanish, which I began to understand, to treat the whole affair as a mere trivial matter, very common in their history; intimating always, that, with such an incentive as

the liberation of the lady in question, none but the most worthless poltroon could have failed to do the same.

I had leisure during this confinement to study all the principal members of the family. All the thoughts of the Conde seemed to be engrossed in arranging the affairs of his government, and repressing the incipient spirit of republicanism, in which he seemed to have had great success. But although everything of that kind appeared to be repressed for the moment, the anxious look of the governor was in perfect accordance with his declaration that this spirit in the people was as coals buried under the ashes, and he predicted that the flames would soon break forth again. He incidentally mentioned that he looked upon Don De Oli as one of the most efficient props of his government, and his future son-in-law. But he appeared too much occupied to bestow any particular attention to his private concerns.

The Condesa still retained traces of beauty. She possessed great talents, and her conversations were rich and interesting. Her eye either flashed with intelligence, or melted with tenderness. In her deportment there seemed nothing manifested toward me but marked and unequivocal partiality and even tenderness. The father confessor, whom they called by the name of Jerome, was a priest of high standing in the country; had been educated in Rome, and had all the external suavity of a courtier. His form was noble, his voice deep and impressive, and every function of his ministry performed with an indescribable grace. Seen at a distance, he inspired respect, but contemplated more closely, there was something in him repressing to confidence and affection. He regarded the spirit of the age, the fermenting germs of republicanism, and the slightest beginnings of innovation in the Catholic hierarchy, with a deep aversion, that savored rather of

hatred than prejudice of education. He was bitter even to persecution, for retaining every jot and tittle of his faith. He regarded me with jealousy and distrust, for which I could hardly account, even on the score of our difference of opinion.

The only time I saw the countenance of Doña Isabel wholly free from anxiety, and her manner toward me as it had been at the first was on the evening when she came into the library during my confinement, leading up to me, and introducing with mock gravity her duenna. "Have you ever read a translated Spanish romance?" said she; "if you have, permit me to show you the identical character, called a duenna. This is Doña Marie, an ancient friend of the family, whose duty it is to keep wild and perverse young persons, like myself, for instance, in the right way. She has the hundred eyes of Argus, and the incorruptible watchfulness of the dragon that guarded the golden fleece. She is as hard as adamant, and is as little exposed to melting as platina. So you see how little danger there is that I should be allowed to act naughtily, even if I would; and how little chance there is that I should bestow my poor hand unworthily." I could with difficulty restrain my laughter, when I looked upon the personage who sustained such a grave office. She was round, short and plump; dressed in a short cotton jacket, which showed her fat and joyous figure to a wonderful advantage. Good nature laughed in her gray eyes and in her ruddy face, which was almost an exact circle. It was obvious that she had availed herself as faithfully of good eating and drinking, and that she was disposed to allow others to follow their inclinations in these and all respects. There was something irresistibly ludicrous in supposing such a person set as a guard over such a young lady as Doña Isabel. She sustained the gravity of her office but a moment. She



laughed and caressed her young mistress, and was gay and voluble, and as she spoke in Spanish, Isabel translated for me into French, with true Spanish gravity. She began by describing the sorrow when her dear young mistress was first carried off by the savages, how many masses were offered and prayers said for her return; how earnestly she had supplicated the Virgin on her account, and how long she had abstained from flesh and wine, under a vow for her return; that, for her part, if she had been a man, and a soldier, like Don De Oli, she would have set out alone, if none would have gone with her, to fight the savages for her rescue. "You are the man for me; for you, that are not of her country or religion, fought for her, while the Don was here at home, mourning and talking about her. I have no doubt that he would murder you at once, if he thought you capable of looking at her with the eyes of love. But I learned many years ago from my mother that love will go where it will. For my part, I never saw two persons look so much alike as you two." Here the young lady blushed deeply, and ceased to translate. But I understood almost every word, and what I did not understand her laughing eyes and significant gestures supplied. She turned to the young lady. "See now," said she, "how he blushes! Who would think that such a blushing and handsome boy could attack and conquer one of those terrible savages? I have seen these heretics before. They have the finest twinkling eyes and ruddy cheeks, and, I have heard, they are sad fellows among the ladies."

She seemed sufficiently disposed to proceed in the same style, but her young mistress interposed, and suddenly resuming her countenance of care, she appeared to make an effort in addressing me. "We have had enough of this," said she, "now we will have, if you please, one word of

seriousness. You cannot be surprised that I have some interest in you, and that I can readily imagine how anxious you must be to have some pursuit and employment. I have been told that all the young men of your country feel this way. Different as our modes of thinking are, I respect such feelings. We are preparing to depart for Durango. We cannot be at home here. My mother has expressed a decided wish that you should accompany us. You will receive a visit from my father, proposing terms of honorable employment with us. Will you deem it forwardness or gratitude in me, if I add my wishes to those of my mother, that these terms may prove acceptable to you? In giving utterance to the purest and simplest of my feelings, I am sure that you are too noble, too generous, to misinterpret me. You have youth, intelligence, learning; everything to fit you for such a theater to which our unhappy country is coming. My father foresees, and it is easy to foresee, the murky clouds of change and rebellion rising on all sides of our horizon; and the times call for wise heads, strong hands, and true hearts. I am sure that our house needs them. For we have the patriots on one side, and my father has enemies and competitors even among the royalists, and he has found, by sad experience, that all is hollow and false on every side. What a noble career opens for a man like you! When my mother expressed the wish that you might remain with us, she remarked what a soothing tranquillity she should derive from knowing that one true and determined heart would be always near us." Much more of a similar import was said, and having thus prepared me for the visit of her father, she left me and the fat and laughing duenna waddled after her.

Soon after the Conde entered, with something more of state and gravity than usual on his brow. He began by

congratulating me on my evident restoration to health. "The physician," he added, "assures us that your wounds are so healed that you may safely go abroad. I have happily completed the business that brought me from home to this distant and inconvenient sojourn. I now propose to return. I know not the cause of your residence among the Comanches. I have understood that you belonged to a party from the States, whose object was to traffic with the Indians. You probably know in what light we look upon those engaged in such expeditions, but we hold you a noble exception. I will not disguise from you that I might excite suspicion by what I am about to propose to you. You are aware in what light we view your country and religion. But we have inquired respecting you of the Comanches, and of the officer and soldiers who saw you in the valley. Even the savages do you justice in the affair with Watook, by which my daughter was liberated. They say you only anticipated the vengeance which they would have inflicted upon him for his treason. They waive all claims to the ransom, and admit that you did right in taking it in your own hands. That sum, the half of which was delivered into my hands with my daughter, together with the effects of Watook, is a considerable fortune. It was forever lost to me, and, in comparison to my daughter, never took up a single thought. That is fairly and decidedly yours, and I am now ready to pay it over to you. But that is not all. It is impossible that I can ever think of releasing myself from the debt of obligation to you. I can show you that I wish to do what is in my power, and I will come to the point. The Condesa wishes you, if your object is to become acquainted with our country, to remain in my family, where you will have access to all official information, and will have every chance to gain this information. That you may feel justified in the possession of



an employment, if you will converse with the father confessor, and allow him to rectify the errors of your understanding in regard to religion and our faith, and pledge your fealty to my government and our king, I will immediately give you a commission of captain in the regiment of Don De Oli in our army." He waited for my reply.

## CHAPTER VII.

## AN ACCEPTABLE POSITION.

I THANKED him for interesting himself in my welfare. I assured him that I should be pleased, if it were in my power, consistently, to accompany him and his family to Durango. I told him that I had not had any very definite views in my journey to the Comanches; that I had been inclined to be a roving youth; that so far as it was clear about my motives, a disposition to wander and see new regions was the first, and money a secondary consideration; that if it came by any honorable enterprise and exertion, I understood the value of it; that in attempting the release of his daughter, I was conscious that my motives were unmixed with any base alloy of that sort, and that to put the thing out of doubt that it was so, the success of that action should be my only reward, and that I hoped he would not hurt my feelings by ever proposing any others; that I should be happy to converse with the father confessor, and should treat him with the respect due to his office, but that my opinions in regard to religion and morals were probably fixed unalterably, and that it was as probable that I might think of converting the father to my views as that he should bend mine to his; that, to the last proposition, I could only say, that in a cause that was consonant with my feelings and principles, no profession would be more congenial

than to bear arms, and that nothing would delight me more than to be provided with any honorable pursuit in his family; but that no consideration, not even the desire to remain with him, could induce me to draw a sword in favor of the claims of Spain upon any part of Spanish America.

He heard me to the close with patience and dignity. He seemed rather surprised than offended, as I feared he would be, with my rejection of his offers. "There is, in truth," said he, "among your people of all classes, a Spartan stubbornness, that I, as a soldier, know how to appreciate. But your refusal of money is, indeed, utterly unlike what I expected from one of your country, and I think it out of place in the present instance. Your republicanism I can pardon. I love a man not the less for being true to his country. As in regards to your faith I well know that we cannot change it when we will. All I request of you with respect to the father confessor, I am sure you will grant, and that is, the deference due to his character and office. He is a wise and learned man. I am not dissatisfied with your inflexibility of character. I wish to retain you in my family. The man who is true and unchanging in so many points will be true to whatever confidence I may repose in him. I hope we shall persuade you to go with us."

"Show me any useful and honorable occupation," I replied, "and I will go with the greatest pleasure. I think, too, that you might count on my fidelity. Never, since I left my native place, have I seen the family where I could feel so happy to remain, if I might do it, and be useful and retain self-respect." "There is one thing more," he replied, "that strikes me upon this subject. I will consider that point with my family, and converse with you again upon this subject before my departure."



I had in this family an unknown, but faithful friend in an Irish Catholic servant named Fergus O'Reilly. He had been absent, it seems, and he now introduced himself to me with a box of books, which, it appeared, had been brought for me by the Spanish officer, who had been sent to escort back Doña Isabel from the Comanche valley. Osuna had collected these, my drawings, and everything that appertained to me, and, together with a letter from the captain of our party to the Spanish country, had sent them on with the other baggage to Santa Fé, hoping that I would return, and accept the honor she intended me. I was struck with this distinguished kindness to a recreant, who seemed so little capable of returning it. Fergus laid down the box with a low bow, and I contemplated his laughing Irish face, his bright florid complexion and his yellow locks with satisfaction, for I saw that he was not Spanish, and could probably speak my native tongue. "Now," said he, "beggin' yer honor's pardon, spake so much as one leetle word in the king's English. It's such a weary while since I have heard niver a word of it." I thanked him for his kindness for bringing my books, and expressed myself pleased to find a member of the family who could speak my mother tongue. "Ar'n't ye the jewel, now?" said he. "It's many the long year that I've heard niver a word of that sort before. Oh! but yer honor has the thrue Irish face, and speaks in the right fashion. I have been in a hot fever to see ye, iver since I heard ye was here. Now, maybe, I don't know a thing or two about this family." He came close to me, and let his voice fall almost to a whisper. "Do ye know what a bother they have been making about ye downstairs?" He paused as if waiting for me to ask him to proceed; I felt, it is true, a strong curiosity to hear on what cause I could have been the theme of conversation. Decorum forbade

me to gratify that curiosity by questioning a servant. Finding that he must go on without any request, or be silent, "Ah!" he proceeded, "yer honor has the grand way now, and I dare say yer honor is true as steel. Well, then, I love ye for yer looks, and the tongue that is in yer head; and, by St. Patrick, I love all that the sweet Isabel loves, and if she don't love yer honor, there is no devil!" "Do you think so, my lad?" said I. "Ay!" he returned, "I thought I could bring yer honor to yer tongue. The sweet Isabel was in tears. The Conde was in a fret. The good, kind Condesa threw in as much for ye as she dared. But there is father Jerome—he is of my father's worship, to be sure. But maybe I don't know him, for all his sanctified airs. And there was the young Don, with his grim face and his big airs, and, devil burn their boots, no good of ye did they say. 'Well,' said I, 'this man has my mother's tongue in his head. He has shed his own blood to kill a heathen savage, and has brought our sweet Isabel home, Heaven brighten her two eyes; and by those tears she belikes him,' said I, 'or I don't know the taste of a paratie. The man,' says I, 'I dare say is a pretty man, though he may believe neither in the Virgin nor St. Patrick.' So I stands yer friend in my heart. I opens both my ears, and the more they told me to hush the more I remembered every word. When I was out, the round Doll, the duenna, hears the rest, and we both put what we heard together. Jasus! what a botheration they made, and all about ye! They rumbled it out in Spanish, but Doll and I heard every word." Here he paused, in hopes now to have raised my curiosity enough to ask him to proceed. I was determined to leave him to himself, to speak or be silent, though I saw no harm in hearing what he had to say. "Now, only look," said he. "Yer honor burns to hear, but says niver a word. Ye shall hear all.

The Conde said ye talked big, and that all yer people are as stiff as asses. But it raised yer honor mightily in all their eyes, that ye would have none of the money. The Conde stuck to it against them all that ye were no common mon, and he swears his biggest Spanish oath, that he believes ye a true rale jantleman. The father confessor, roast him! said he thought ye an Orangeman, and a bad heretic, and so much the worse that ye was knowing, and was handsome enough to pervert all the young ladies in the region. How much has he swayed the Condesa and her daughter already! Then he commanded them in the name of the holy mother to discard ye from their thoughts. They both looked so sweet in his cross face, devil roast him, and begged him not to think it a sin, that they esteemed ye for yer valor and truth. 'And these,' said he, in his deep voice, and looking this fashion, 'and these are just the baits by which the devil lures away the hearts of the faithful in the form of heresy.' The young Don bounced about the while, like a roasted chestnut, and said that yer honor had tried to steal away the heart of the sweet Isabel. And then her eyes sparkled as though she would have lighted upon him, and then she told him that ye was all truth and honor, and as incapable of trying to do that as she was to allow it; and that ye had too much courage and generosity to abuse the absent. Then he was cross back again, and said, 'That is the way the fellow inveigles ye all with his big airs,' and that he meant to call ye out and teach ye the difference between fightin' a Christian jantleman and a poor Indian. At this word Isabel brushed away her tears, and maybe she didn't give him a look! 'Very likely, Don De Oli, ye may think that would be the way to raise yerself in my esteem. It would be quite the pretty turn to the only man who dared expose himself to rescue me from a condi-



tion worse than death.' And then she drew up grand—this way—and she looked wild, and her eyes glistened, the jewel. And she says, 'Now hear me all. I know that my father is too great and noble to be set against a man who has done so much for me, by any of ye. I have my father's spirit in me. Treat him badly, and ye will make me love him. I owe my father deference and obedience, but none of ye can command the heart.' Yer honor, I remember every word. And then she went on to say she would make any vow, never to think of yer honor, but if they drove ye away from a family that owed ye so much she would hate Don De Oli forever, and that it would go farther to make her a heretic than anything else. All this while the sweet girl had been screwed up, and then she burst into an agony of tears, and I knew not what happened, for they drove me out of the room. But the round Doll says that the Conde sniveled, the Condesa cried, and that Don De Oli and the father were glad to clear themselves, and so yer honor seems to have had the day among them. God love yer honor for speaking English, and looking like an Irishman. And what do you think the Condesa says? She says, 'Fergus, I think he will go with us, and if he does, Fergus, ye shall be his servant.'"

At supper, as Fergus had related, every face was sad or clouded. The Condesa and her daughter made efforts to seem calm, and as though nothing had happened. But the traces of the recent storm were sufficiently visible in the countenances of the rest. After supper I was left alone with the Conde. He resumed the former conversation, apparently with cordiality. "I have been thinking," said he, "of your wish to find employment, and of your expressed willingness to reside in my family. It occurred to me and to the Condesa that there is such here, and just such as fits the case. Let me premise one thing: My

daughter is young, ardent, inexperienced, and destined for Don De Oli. We have all, her mother, my daughter, myself, an entire confidence in you. She has seemed more backward in meeting our views there than I could have wished. I have but this one, and she is the light of my eyes. I would be glad not to force her inclinations. Women are naturally wilful. She leads us to think that kindness to you will be the readiest way to bring her inclinations to this union. You will understand our views, and if you cannot further them we confide in your honor that you will not impede them. Thus much premised I will proceed: Some time ago we made inquiries for a person suitably qualified for an instructor in English. My daughter is well versed in French and Latin, and has long wished to add English to her acquirements. There are some other young ladies in Durango, associates of my daughter, who will join to form a class, and Don De Oli will be of the number. The time, mode and compensation shall be settled by yourself. Will you consent to take charge of such a class?" I thanked him, and told him that at first view it seemed precisely the employment which I should have chosen, and that I wished only the succeeding night for consideration, and would give him an answer in the morning.

The evening was one of preparation, for the family proposed to commence their journey for Durango the next day. A royal regiment of troops in fine uniforms and discipline had arrived from Durango and had pitched their tents on the square, as an escort for the Conde on his journey. The militia of the country had been pouring into the town during the afternoon. They were fantastically fine in their array, and made more noise and display than the regular troops. The bugle, the drum and fife, and occasionally a full band mixed their martial notes. The

hum of the loungers, who were idly busy looking upon this scene of preparation, was heard on all sides. Great numbers of the provincial officers, and of private gentlemen with their families, were in waiting to take leave of the Conde. Illuminations and refreshments were prepared for the occasion. There was a public supper, at which I sat with more than a hundred people. After supper there was a promenade in the public garden attached to the palace, and the family of the Conde enjoyed their friends and the delightful coolness of the evening in the garden. It was there that the citizens and public functionaries were to take leave of the governor. I received a card of invitation to share the walk with the family. Every walk and alley of the garden was occupied by great numbers of people. The garden was brilliantly illuminated. The varieties of beautiful trees and shrubs, most of them new to me, with their luxuriant foliage, gilded with the flickering rays from a hundred lamps, the lofty palms, that mounted into the air almost beyond sight, produced a most striking effect upon the eye. The country has a variety of birds that sing in the night, and they seemed to enjoy the splendor of the illumination, and to swell their throats with hilarity. Everything conspired to produce that train of sentiment that thrilled every nerve with delightful, but melancholy sensation. I know not why, but I thought deeply, almost painfully, of home, and of the circle of which I was a part, and where I was of some consequence. Here circumstances had established a kind of standing for me; but I was a stranger, endured rather than desired, at least by part of the family. Of the numerous groups that were chatting, and walking, and enjoying themselves in all the intimacy of acquaintance, I knew not one; and of those who passed me, and made the inquiry of transient curiosity about me, it was sufficient



with the most of them to bound their interest, to know that I was a heretic, and an inhabitant of the States. I wandered to the farthest extremity of the garden, where a beautiful little brook rippled over pebbles, and fell into a deep basin in the corner of the garden. In this basin, so smooth that it reflected everything like a mirror, the lights of the sky, of the garden and the moon, over which fleecy clouds were sailing with a gentle breeze, acacias and catalpas, with their stems all tufted with flowers, were seen shooting into the still depths their reflected brightness and beauty. Here I seated myself on a bench to enjoy the scene, and to meditate and fix my purpose for the morrow. My thoughts wandered. Before I could combine and arrange the elements of the calculation my thoughts had escaped a thousand leagues from the subject in hand. To concentrate thought, and fix the mind, external nature, especially if beautiful, must be excluded. Imagination was too busy for reason and judgment. Nature was too enticing, and the air too full of the ambrosia of the catalpas, and the breeze too bland, for the operation of painful thinking. I fell involuntarily into my habit of reverie. The drudgery and vexation necessary to sustain the grosser elements of our existence, the contemptible, and yet impassable barriers erected between kindred minds by birth, habit, riches, country, religion, "to stay or not to stay" in a family where all these barriers existed between me and its members, and where, if I might flatter myself that I had some interest with some of them, I knew I was only sufferance with the rest, that was the question. It may be foreseen how pride and independence would, perhaps ought to, settle the question. There was another efficient element in the calculation, which had, I doubt not, its influence at that time, unknown to myself. Vanity whispered that a certain member of the family betrayed,

against herself, a strong desire that I should stay. But I reflected how often and how bitterly would they make me feel that they considered me a heretic, poor, and an adventurer. How often must I endure the insolent haughtiness of Don De Oli, and suffer from the deeper plottings of the father confessor. Then the beauty of the evening would withdraw my thoughts from this painful subject. I heard the sparrow, the red bird, the mocking bird, pouring their little hearts into their song. I looked up to the dome of that great temple of nature

*"The sky,*  
*Spread, like an ocean hung on high,*  
*Bespangled with those isles of light,*  
*So wildly, spiritually bright.*  
*Who ever saw them brightly shining,*  
*And turn'd to earth without repining;*  
*Nor wish for wings to soar away,*  
*And mix with their eternal ray?"*

As I applied these lines in thought to the feelings of the moment, the Condesa and her daughter, disengaged from the company with whom I had seen them walking, came round in front of the basin. I moved to resign my seat to them. "No," said the Condesa, "sit still, and allow us to share your seat, and the benefit of your lonely meditations. It appears to me that your temperament inclines you too much to solitude. It seems wrong that solicitude and care should anticipate the effect of years, and touch such a fresh countenance as yours." "Loneliness, madam," I answered, "is not painful to me. But they who should infer, from seeing me much alone, that I was occupied by profound or painful thought, would look too deep for the cause. I would claim nothing more for

this taste than the simple merit that belongs to it. I am, madam, by nature a dreamer with my eyes open. If I might be permitted to record my early habits, the first pleasures of my existence, that I remember, were in the vernal and autumnal northeastern storms of that region where I was bred, when the wind howled and the trees were bending under the gale, and the mist and sleet poured along in sweeping columns to repair, to the sea shore, in the height of the storm. Here I would sit for hours, regardless of the elements, listening to the roar of the winds and marking the dashing of the spray as it mixed with the white mist of the sky. With what pleasure I saw the billowy mountains roll in to the shore and burst against the cliffs! And then, to see them retire again and leave the deep, black caverns of the rocks exposed to view, and to watch the return of the enormous and dashing surge—such were my earliest and most intense enjoyments. My friends used to chide me for foolish exposure, or to pity me as one addicted to gloom and melancholy. It was in vain that I told them that these were the happiest moments of my life. My tastes were not theirs, and they could not account for them. My mind at present, I would hope, has somewhat enlarged the range of thought, and the number of its combinations. But I am now as much addicted to this dreamy existence as ever. I would not proudly say with the great ancient, “Never less alone, than when alone,” for I am not sure that this indulgence of musing and reverie is favorable to thinking. I only know that it is favorable to enjoyment. I never flattered myself that I possessed the genius of Rousseau, and I am sure that I have always detested many of his opinions. But when he tells with so much native simplicity of his disposition to dream with his eyes open, when he speaks of committing himself to his open



skiff on that sweet lake, throwing himself at his length on its bottom, raising his eyes to the sky, and floating at the will of the breeze, and losing hours with no other recollection than the pleasurable consciousness of existence, he describes a taste, absurd as you may deem it, precisely like mine."

"You describe to me," she replied, "the mind of a very romantic, but not a bad young man. I have the more indulgence for such follies, as, at your time of life, I was much addicted to them myself. Delightful days! I never tire of looking back upon my visions when the world, existence, everything, was a romance. We all learn the difference soon enough, between the sweet visions of youth and the sad reality of actual existence." I replied that I suspected that there was a sufficient leaven of romance in my composition to unfit me for the hard struggle and the dry composition of actual existence. "I have been so often and so bitterly reprov'd for indulging these dreaming propensities, have heard the maxim so often circulated that we are placed on the earth to act and not to dream, that I have ended by doubting the innocence of this propensity, and have striven to conquer it. If you say, madam, that you have felt the same propensities, you will reconcile me to myself. It was, I suspect, the indulgence of this original propensity that brought me to this region, so remote from my native country. I was always delighted with books of voyages and travel. I sail with the voyager, I journey with the traveler. I climb with him over his snowy mountains, or enjoy the boundless horizon of the plains. I float down the river with the wanderer of the Mississippi. I have heard your daughter quote Chateaubriand. Some passages in his travels are to me of the highest order of poetry, and abundant ailment for day-dreams. Nothing can be more delightful than some of

those periods, where he relates his impressions in the midst of the magnificence and boundlessness of the savage nature of our forests, when the moon arises upon them, and diffuses over them the great secret of melancholy. I will give but one passage, and I recur to one that has scarcely been named, but which strikes me the more. 'For me, a solitary lover of nature, and a simple confessor of the Divinity, I have sat down among the ruins. A traveler, unknown to fame, I have conversed with these mouldering monuments, as unknown as myself. The night was in the midst of her course. Everything was silent, the moon, the wood, and the tombs. Only at long intervals was heard the fall of some tree, which the ax of time had cut down in the depths of the forest. Thus everything falls. Thus everything turns to nothing.'" Doña Isabel here remarked, with some earnestness: "You have proved, sir, that, differently as we have been bred there is a striking coincidence in our tastes. My mother knows how much I was delighted with that very passage. To me he says much. He often speaks to my heart. There are in it some of the most eloquent passages, and some of the most impressive sentences of that beautiful prose poetry, which seems peculiar to the French. But I have yet to discover the connection between this passage, and that determination, which brought you into our country." I answered, "that I was determined to converse with nature alone in those prairies, and those boundless deserts, that he so delightfully painted to my imagination. I could not hope to find these places except in the western regions of my own country, and that part of yours contiguous to them. My journey thus far has more than realized my imagination. I worshiped in all the forms of nature, from the swamps of the Mississippi to the sublime scenery of yonder chains of mountains, and the beautiful

valley, in which dwell the ruthless Comanches; a place so exquisitely beautiful that your daughter, under all the gloom and apprehension of her residence there, felt that beauty; to this place, where all the contrasts of social and primitive life, of wealth and poverty, refinement and simplicity, are brought side by side. Providence has opened to me sources of moral satisfaction in the chain of events, which caused me to become acquainted with your daughter, which I would not have exchanged for any other the world could have offered me. Come what will, I will always rejoice that I became a wanderer, and that Providence has brought me here."

"This brings me," added the Condesa, "to the point that has been on my mind from the first. You delight in journey. You have been advised that we depart to-morrow for Durango. It is a beautiful country between here and there. The Conde has made you a proposition to accompany us. You have promised him an answer in the morning. May we not hope that you will consent to go with us? If I thought you like other young men I should not dare to tell you how much I desire it. The people in this country are so wild and ignorant, and at the present time we are surrounded by so many enemies, so many dangers of every sort, rebellion, treason, and discord, that you can hardly conjecture how my confidence goes out toward a young man, educated, principled, high-minded, and, to use Fergus' expression, 'as true as steel.' Indeed, we hope you will go with us. I do not disguise that you will have to encounter prejudices. But I have a presentiment that you will triumph over all. You do not talk of returning to your own country. Ah! you must feel how much you need a mother. I will be that mother to you. Could you but renounce your errors! Could you have but accepted a commission from my husband, there is nothing



for which you might not have hoped. But heretic and republican as you are, both the Conde and myself have the most undoubting confidence in you. Only stay with us, and you will be gradually trained to our ways and finally become one of us."

I replied that if I were to consult my own inclinations I should not need the additional motive of her wishes, so affectionately expressed, to decide me. But that I felt all the difficulties of religion and principles; and that under such circumstances it would not be honorable for me to stay without a sufficient and respectable employment, that would furnish me a vocation that would justify me in staying; that I feared that this proposition to employ me to teach English in the family was merely gotten up to satisfy me, and as a kind of compensation for supposed services.

"Far from it," she replied. "Our relations with your country and England is daily increasing. We made an effort to obtain a suitable teacher before we became acquainted with you. It is no new fancy of my daughter's and mine."

"I perceive," said Isabel, "that you need a great deal of inducement, and that we have to labor to bring it about. But even at the hazard of ministering to your vanity, I shall not fear to add my wishes to my mother's. You have still been talking about your wish to find employment. You will not deny that this is respectable, nor that you are qualified for it. Let us hope that you will shorten the matter, and put an end to our suspense and stay. You do not know what a diligent pupil I shall be. You will have three charming pupils, besides myself, and a fourth, extremely rich, and Don De Oli, a royal officer, and so forth. Besides, if you will promise to be good and docile, we will teach you our language in turn."

I replied that I felt a strong desire to see more of the country, and that no better opportunity could ever be offered me. I thought I was competent to the employment in question; that I should depend much upon their indulgence to a stranger, who knew so little of their manners, and that I should trust to their friendship to put me right when I was in the way of making mistakes. I will accept and do the best I can. I am not a little swayed to this decision by the motive which Doña Isabel has suggested, that while I am teaching her my language I shall be learning hers.

The Condesa added: "In acceding to my proposition, you have removed a weight of uneasiness. We were fearful that you would carry your feelings of independence to the point of pride, and that you would be governed by sentiments of self-respect that were impracticable. One word more, and we will drop the conversation. You can readily imagine the bearings of the relation which you will sustain among us, and that all eyes which will be turned upon you will not be as mine. Only calculate at times what construction can be put upon innocent actions. For the rest, it is precisely because I have no fear that anything will make you swerve from the right path, that I have become a kind of guarantee for you with those who have supposed that it might be hazardous to entrust such a charge to such a young man. You see, that I deal with you with maternal frankness, and I have no fear of the result. But I perceive it is too cool for us to sit still. Let us take a turn in the garden. It is not such a one as I will show you at my own home, but still it is pretty, and the evening is delightful." She accepted my arm, and we wandered through the mazes of the garden, at every turn inhaling a new perfume of flowers, or taking a new view, set off with all the mild and magic brilliancy of a full and

unclouded moon. All restraint was removed by the place and circumstances, and the recent understanding with each other. The conversation, flowing from the deep sources, where restraint and formality so often confine it, became cordial and frank. We were getting more into the tone of one family, when a message from a family of consequence, who wished to take leave of the Condesa, called her from us, and left me alone with the daughter. It cannot be doubted that such a situation must have been to me a desirable one. But I found myself timid and silent, for the good reason that nothing occurred for me to say. I had supposed that I should be at least as fluent as I had been when we were journeying from the valley. I felt, indeed, tied up by the inviolable laws of honor and confidence, and had no idea of attempting to make love to the beautiful Spanish girl. I had scarcely searched whether I felt an impulse to do it. I was certain that she would have frowned upon any approaches to such a strain. I had taken it for granted, that somehow our conversation would have assumed a confidential character. But the moment we were left alone, amidst jessamines and roses, and she leaning on my arm, alas! I might say, "My voice clung to my mouth." She now and then made a remark, to which I replied by the monosyllable, Yes, or No. This soon ceased, and we walked back and forward among the bowers in profound silence. We saw the father confessor and Don De Oli walking together at the head of the alley. This restored speech to her. "We shall have, I hope," said she, "a pleasant journey together. Oh! that it were to be like that from the valley." Saying this, she bade me adieu, and tripped away.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## DURANGO.

*"The moon shines bright, and her silvery light  
Through the forest aisles is glancing;  
And with trembling beam on the rippling stream  
A thousand stars are dancing.  
No noise is heard, save the lonely bird,  
That hoots from his desert dwelling;  
Or the distant crash of some aged ash,  
Which the ax of time is felling."*

WE were awakened at three in the morning by the ringing of bells, the blowing of bugles, and the noise and bustle of preparation for the journey. Squadrons of horse galloped backwards and forwards. I was aroused by my good friend Fergus, who told me how glad he was that I was to go with them. He had brought me a billet from the Conde, whom the Condesa had notified of my acceptance of his proposition, politely expressing his satisfaction on that account, and proposing different arrangements for my comfort on the journey, among other things, requesting me to avail myself of the service of Fergus. He, on his part, was in raptures, and poured out his expressions with true Irish hilarity. I left a letter for my companions,

intimating the course that I had taken and making arrangement for the disposal of my proportion. I mounted the fine horse that I had taken from Watook, and Fergus rode mine. The Condesa and her daughter, Don De Oli and the father confessor rode in the family carriage. The Conde rode his fine gray charger at the head of his troops. As we passed the family Don De Oli had just assisted the Condesa and her daughter into the carriage, and was getting in himself. Fergus rode close to me, and said, in a low tone: "Now, God bless yer honor, that is provoking. See that swarthy fellow. Scorch his black whiskers! He is going to live in clover. And they just stuff the sweet Isabel beside the polecat, like a pig in the bag. Ay! but if she had her heart's content she'd not be there. Never mind, my master, every dog has his day."

The array was soon in marching order. The band struck up a slow and solemn march—almost a funeral strain—a Spanish martial air of parting. The trampling of horses disturbed the stillness of the morning, and the impression of the music and the scene thrilled through my frame. Who can account for such a deep feeling from circumstances, which at another time, would have produced no feeling at all? Our place was in the advance.

The morning dawned upon us as we came upon the Rio Grande at the Parso. The river is of considerable width here, but white with its furious current dashing over rocks. The scenery is most delightfully wild and romantic.

Our morning militia left us here, and was replaced by other troops. We halted in this village for breakfast. The order of march for the remainder of the day was reversed; those who had been in advance were now to be in the rear. In falling back for this arrangement the Conde's family passed us. The morning was bright and warm. The glasses and the curtains of the carriage were raised,

and I had the mortification to see Doña Isabel squeezed on the same seat with Don De Oli, looking, as Fergus expressed it, "as grim as death." Not even the enviable place he occupied could smooth his moody brow. This fellow had always looked on me with lowering countenance from the first. I confess I felt a singular twinge of ill feeling toward him, as I saw them pass.

"Is this," said I again to myself, "is this that terrible disorder called love, and in this case, silly love, without hope, or the chance of return? And are these the feelings of envy and jealousy?"

The country along the route was sufficiently pleasant as to be interesting. The villages we passed through were composed of a mixed race of people, dirty and ragged. We passed through Chihuahua, the largest town in that part of the country. I made some acquaintance with the officers of the regiment. None of them but Colonel Arredondo spoke French, and of him I shall have occasion to speak hereafter. Of course my intimacy with the rest went no farther than the common forms of civility. There was a marked jealousy toward me, which I placed to the score of my country. I regularly exchanged salutations with the Conde, who simply inquired of me how I found the journey. I spoke but twice with the Condesa and her daughter. I found Fergus to possess a cleverness and a fund of vivacity and amusement beyond all price.

It was high noon when we entered the city of Durango, whose spires I had seen glittering in the distance for some leagues. Before we arrived here it was easy to see we were in a rich mining region, for many of the utensils in the mud cabins were of massive silver. The city itself presented the same striking contrasts of magnificence and littleness, of splendor and meanness, of palaces and hovels, that we had seen all along our journey. On one hand was



the vast cathedral, with its dome and columns, its silver shrine, its ornaments inlaid with gold and sparkling with gems, and its fine paintings, beside miserable daubs of St. Michael and his dragon; on the other, palaces surrounded by their orangeries, and cool with the dash of fountains playing into basins of marble; and the gorgeous displays of temples, peristyles, columns, and all the ostentatious display of luxury, towering above filthy and mud-walled cabins. The rational part of the city was like the architectural. Here were men in the richest dresses, and their ladies gaily adorned and sparkling with diamonds, and a moving mass of life by their side, clad in leather jackets, and dirty, red baize shirts. Such was my first impression of the wealthy city of Durango, the centre of a very rich mining district, with a population of thirty thousand souls.

I omit the circumstances of the Conde's reception here in the central city of his government. I am not an expert at the description of these things. You can imagine the contrast between scenes of this sort in my own country and here.

Immediately upon passing the town, we entered upon the Conde's estate. A private road led us along an avenue, shaded with catalpas and China trees, and the stone cottages had a neatness and uniformity, very different from anything that I had yet seen in the country. The road itself was a curiosity, and wound around the bases of fine slopes, covered with luxuriant vines, patches of tobacco, fields of wheat, and groves of orange, fig, and other trees; and the very air was perfumed with the sweet odor of the jessamine. It was lined on either side by that splendid plant which the French call *pite*, and which is, I believe, a species of the cactus.

Through such an avenue we road for five or six miles, until a sharp turn in the road cleared us of the hills and





CONDÉ'S MANSION.



opened to our view the columns in front of the massive and turreted stone mansion of the Conde, embowered in the shade of huge sycamores that reared their white arms as high as the turrets. Amidst these ancient bowers it occupied the centre of a gentle eminence. A lawn of many acres, turfed with the perfect verdure of blue grass, sloped to the banks of a small stream, which brawled along over pebbles and rocks, and almost encircled the lawn. Domestic animals of all kinds, and domesticated animals of the wild races, as the deer, buffalo, cabri, and other animals unknown to me, were ruminating in the shade along with sheep, goats and cows. A considerable village of the houses of tenants, and the offices of servants and retainers of the family, were built in parallel lines, with strict regard to comfort and utility, as well as pleasing effect, in the rear of the mansion. That these appeared to be coeval, and all built of the same material, a beautiful greenish gray soapstone, which had a charming effect upon the eye. The fences and all the appurtenances of this sort, were either of this stone, or of the imperishable mulberry or cedar, and were massive, strong, and painted white, or to imitate the stone, and all seemed to have especial regard to perpetuity, as well as beauty. Smooth mountains in the form of cones or towering and ragged points of granite, finished the distant outline. The sun was descending as we rode under the shade of the sycamores. It was a scene of comfort, repose and grandeur, which filled the heart and eye. At the entrance to the lawn the crowds of citizens, the rabble of the city, and the militia left us. A select and invited party of ladies and gentlemen of the vicinity, and of favorite officers remained to welcome the return of the Conde to his mansion by a *fête*.

To me the joyous greeting of the servants, domestics and

retainers of the family, who amounted to some hundreds, formed a pageant a thousand times more impressive than the stern and bannered ceremonial with which we had been treated for some time past, even to a surfeit. This, too, was arranged with the air of a *fête*. But here the demonstration was real. It was amidst troublous times, in which the people were constantly alarmed with "wars and the rumors of wars," that he had returned to a peaceful and rural retirement. A host of dependents, who identified their own security, comfort and even consequence, with his, welcomed him home. What a different air has everything that is done with the heart, from that which is merely *got up*? With how much sweetness and tenderness did Doña Isabel receive their caresses and congratulations? I had the satisfaction of seeing the affectionate bursts of joy with which she was welcomed home. Amidst the general melting of hearts, I had the delight to receive a cordial grasp of her hand, and a welcome of manner and eye, which I treasured in my heart, as I was shown by her to a cushioned seat in the shade. The Condesa and the Conde, the father confessor, and Don De Oli, even seemed to have relaxed from their customary gravity, and the latter especially were unwonted in their cordiality to me. I was introduced in rapid succession to the officers and to a crowd of gentlemen and ladies. Three or four of the latter were beautiful, as many tolerable, and the remainder were yellow, swarthy and badly formed, but were dressed in fantastic finery, and only calculated, as I could not help remarking to Doña Isabel, as a foil to her. To this compliment a slight courtesy was her reply.

A most bountiful supper was spread on rustic tables on the grass, and all was joy and festivity. Amidst the babble of voices, plates and gaiety I was able to receive and return, without notice, many of those kind and affectionate

remarks of welcome, so naturally growing out of the time and place. I was positive that Isabel evinced a decided partiality for me; and there was a gladness of heart in her welcome to me of which she was not conscious. Surely, I thought, vanity could not misinterpret all this.

After supper there was dancing. The Conde and his lady, the officers and their ladies chimed in. The tall colonel, Don De Oli, the future son-in-law, led out the Doña Isabel to head a national dance. It was one of those into which the Spanish enter with enthusiasm. I was, and still am, morose upon this subject. But never had I witnessed anything to compare with the grace, elasticity and sweetness of the dancing of Doña Isabel. I had never before conceived that there could be the highest grace, science, and even expression of the heart in dancing. She seemed to inspire her tall, grim partner with dignity and grace. Clapping of hands and the most unbounded expressions of joy were drawn forth from the spectators. The incipient feeling of heartburn was a little mitigated by witnessing the comic distress of my friend Fergus, who was tall, and who was obliged to sustain his part with the gay, plump duenna, who did her best at a bow, and waddled with her short figure like a duck, that produced an uncontrollable laugh on all sides. Isabel shared in it with the highest glee. Even I could not exercise the supplicated forbearance which the countenance of Fergus seemed to demand of me, and, against myself, I laughed heartily with the rest.

I might have remarked that it was the fashion in ~~this~~ dance for old and young, parents and children, masters and servants, on these occasions to join in the same dance. The Conde and his lady had paid their tribute to the custom, and were seated under a spreading sycamore, witnessing with calm satisfaction the joyous group of their



friends and dependents. Her partner had led their daughter to a seat, and was engaged in conversation with an officer. Greatly to my surprise and satisfaction Isabel beckoned me to her.

"I am thinking," she said, "how to render you popular in this region. Nothing would do it so effectually as to conform so much to our ways as to take part in this dance. It is a national mania with us. You have seen me go through with it, and I judge from your looks that it struck you as a very ridiculous affair. I am not ashamed to say that I enjoy it. I hold it right to countenance these people in their innocent gaieties. I am most annoyed with the insipid and flat compliments of these military heroes. Our national manners call for all this, and allow strangers privileges here which would not be tolerated in any other place. I should think it would conform to your republican notions to see the rich and poor mixing together in the same sports. Will you have the goodness to walk this dance with me? With what you have seen, and with a few directions which I can give you at the time, I am sure that you can manage the dance. It will be acceptable to my parents and the people. At another time and place I might not be allowed this familiarity with one of another nation. Here it will be entirely in place."

I think that envy and jealousy was the real spice of my reply. "Thank you," said I, and here I added all her titles, "for your condescension, and for the care you take to remind me of it. It is as unexpected as it is ungrateful. I have seldom danced in my own country. The dances there seem to be sufficiently ridiculous. I confess, if you will, that yours do not seem less so. If I wished to caricature rational beings in the deepest malignity of my heart, I would set them to capering, bowing, skipping and

conducting after the manner of this dance. I may as well pass for a cynic and ill-bred at once. But I do not love to see those for whom I entertain the feelings I have had for you engaged in this way. Besides, I should not exactly choose to be the foil to set off the dancing of your late partner. I must deny myself the honor which you propose me." She arose and stood before me, and fixed her keen black eyes upon me with a scrutiny at once intense, modest and yet firm, as though she would read to the bottom of my heart. "Do you not only misinterpret, sir, but mock at my purpose?" said she. "I see well that you understand how much I wish your esteem. I cannot even flatter myself that there is any lurking feeling of jealousy in all this lowering of your countenance. Your philosophy, sir, is too hard-hearted, and sees the ridiculous too keenly for me. I thought that a young lady under my obligations, and who kept a strict guard that too much of the heart should not break out in expressing those obligations, and who had in her veins the unpolluted blood of twenty generations of noble descent, might consider what I proposed to you as a condescension on my part. I see, sir, that I have mistaken you. I am to be your pupil, and I will show you that I am not apt to make a second mistake when the first is clearly seen."

She calmly walked away rather in sorrow than in wrath, and I was deceived if the flashing of her dark eyes was not dimmed and suffused with tears. I was disarmed of envy and jealousy, and all the legion was cast out in a moment. I never remembered to have felt worse. It was not acidity or heartburn now, but emotions made up of mixed ingredients, but all of them more bitter than aloes. "Despiser of dancing!" said I to myself, "this is your pitiful philosophy. And then the nobleness of her motive, her consideration and mild benevolence! Let her ask me to

dance again, and I will dance, if I figure more ridiculously than even the fat duenna." But the evening passed away without offering any chance to manifest either repentance or reparation. I was shown to my apartment without being able to catch the eye of Isabel for a moment. The confused hum of the parting company gradually lessened upon my ear and I had scarcely pressed my pillow before my imagination was weaving a laborious web of dreaming. Mrs. Radcliffe's castles, priests and ghosts figured in succession before my eye; and the catastrophe of each scene was Doña Isabel shedding tears at the thought of finding me guilty of the baseness of envy.

The next two days were days of finding my latitude and bearings at the table, in the house and in the walks. Fergus furnished my table in my own room, a charming apartment, partly lighted with painted glass, and partly ventilated with Venetian blinds. Everything that could be devised for the comfort of a scholar was placed in it: books, stationery, a writing desk, a lolling chair, and a few articles of sumptuous furniture. The blinds opened directly among the branches of sycamores and catalpas, and I could reach the clusters of grapes that hung from the interlaced vines with my hands. The first sounds of the morning were the mellow whistle of the red bird, and the matins of the nightingale, directly on a level with my window. I spent a good portion of these two days in wandering unheeded and alone under the ancient groves of these beautiful grounds, in the shade of gigantic trees, planted by nature, beyond all date, and in her own order. Fine swells, verdant dells, springs, brooks, and the river, of which I have spoken; innumerable flocks of beasts and birds, comprising, as it seemed to me, all the varieties of the ark; beautiful stone cottages, clustered with the bigonia in full bloom; comfort, industry, repose, and moun-



tains towered in the distance—these were the features of the landscape.

I found the intelligence and good nature of Fergus invaluable. From him I gleaned much of that small local information, which is at once so necessary and so difficult to obtain. There was something peculiarly amiable and good about him, and I was interested in hearing his story. He was one of those ten thousand poor Irish Catholic adventurers, who were seeking bread, and employment more especially in Catholic countries. Enthusiastically attached to every remembrance of home, the circumstance of my speaking English drew his kind heart toward me. The deep and grateful affection which he felt for the Condesa and her daughter, and something of transformed kindness to me, as her supposed deliverer, added another tie. The only failing was one of too much kindness, a disposition to outrun the limits of propriety in bringing information of what was passing in the family in regard to me.

## CHAPTER IX.

## A TEACHER OF ENGLISH.

THE third morning after my arrival I was invited again to my place at the table with the family. After suitable compliments and inquiries if everything was right in my apartments, and other commonplace conversation, I was informed that my limited number of six pupils were waiting to have me arrange my time for giving them lessons in English. I proposed commencing immediately. Fergus received directions with respect to the horses and a carriage whenever I chose to ride, and I was invited, with great politeness, in all respects to consider myself as a member of the family, and dispose of my time and amusement at my own discretion. The eye of the Conde constantly wandered as though he struggled with internal apprehension of rebellion and civil discord. The father and Don De Oli had returned to their usual stern reserve toward me. The Condesa and her daughter were rather formal than otherwise. There were a few officers, besides the family, at the table. For myself, I was treated with civility enough, but I had the uncomfortable sensation of seeming to impose restraint upon the whole circle. It was arranged that I should give my first lesson between three and five in the afternoon, commencing with that day.

At the assigned hour my grammars and dictionaries were selected and my pupils introduced to me, in the place where I preferred to receive them, in my own apartment. With two of them Doña Isabel and Don De Oli, you are already acquainted. A teacher's comfort in the discharge of his thankless, yet responsible, duties depends much, as every one knows, upon the disposition and character of his pupils. You have passed through that bitter discipline and have served in that hard warfare, and you will sympathize with me while I introduce you to the rest of my pupils. I comprehended in a moment, that in Don De Oli I had an arrogant observer and a vigilant spy; whose least concern was to learn the language, and who would yet find fault with his instructor for his want of progress. The elder of the four strangers I should have supposed was about nineteen. She, too, was noble and had been born in Old Spain, and had a half-dozen long names, terminating in *a*, and was, like Isabel, an only daughter, and an heiress of a long string of titles, and what imported much more, even there, an immense fortune. She had a fine figure, an air rather haughty, a brownish complexion, and black locks and eyes. She was much more gaudily dressed than Isabel, and the general expression was pride of wealth and uncontrolled feeling. To avoid the incumbrance of her names and titles, I shall call her by her first name, Dorothea. The other three were of the name of Vonpelt, daughters of a miner of Saxon descent, who had accumulated vast wealth and now lived a retired life. These daughters were from eighteen to fourteen, beautiful girls, with round faces of the purest and most brilliant red and white, with flowing flaxen curls on their alabaster necks, and mild and melting blue eyes. They struck me as most amiable, untamed romps, with the kindest sensibilities, and whose good dispositions were so unchangeable



as to have survived the extreme indulgence with which they had been managed, or rather mismanaged by their widowed father, who loved them with such a doting fondness as would be apt to cherish their faults as their virtues.

Few situations can be imagined more embarrassing and awkward than mine; a stranger, of a different nation and religion, thus commencing a task hard and unthankful at the best, under every advantage, and here undertaken with pupils, who, except Isabel, spoke very indifferent French, the only language in which I could communicate with them, and thus beginning upon a language which foreigners generally suppose extremely difficult to learn. I made a few remarks by way of explaining my plan, and mutual diligence necessary for our reciprocal duties, and I assigned them their lessons. Isabel evidently remembered what had occurred at the *fête*, but she seated herself to her task with the unaffected docility and earnestness of one who meant to learn. The only time in which I had seen a smile on the grim face of Don De Oli was when I gave him his task. There was on his face an ironical semblance of submission, which became him as much as capers do an elephant. Dorothea, instead of looking at her book, eyed me from head to foot. The Misses Vonpelt, in a language neither French, German nor Spanish, but a compound of all, eagerly proposed a great many questions, and laughed heartily at me and themselves for not being able to understand each other. A grave smile at our embarrassment interrupted the studies of Isabel, and she quietly set us right by interpreting for us. They thanked her in Spanish, as they said, for bringing them so pretty a fellow to teach them English. She bade them be quiet, for that I understood Spanish. This produced from them more laughter and romping, and it was some time before I obtained stillness. I applied myself to

the Spanish, while they were engaged with their English; and we proposed as a trial of speed which of us should first learn the language of the other. The attention of Isabel was sustained and entire. Don De Oli arose repeatedly, took out his watch, yawned, and said as plainly as actions could say it, this is a most simple business for a man of my dignity. Dorothea walked carelessly round the room, examined the paintings, and looked me full in the face, asked me if the dress I wore was the fashion of my country. The Saxon young ladies found inexplicable difficulties, teased me with innumerable questions, but seemed both good natured and disposed to learn. The recitations corresponded to these different degrees of attention. That of Isabel comprised all that was within the limits of the task assigned. Don De Oli strove to hide his want of his lesson under the affected indifference and disregard to the business. Dorothea answered my questions by proposing questions in turn, asking me the English of different words. The Misses Vonpelt blushed, attempted to recite, and the youngest of them shed some tears. I treated them with great gentleness, and made all possible excuses for them, to which they replied by saying that I was a dear, kind master, and that they would do better the next time. Thankful was I to get over this first formidable business so well. Isabel tarried one moment after the departure of the others. I seized that moment to make amends, which I had vowed to myself to make the first opportunity, for my misbehavior of the former evening. "Allow me," said I, "to avail myself of this chance to tell you that I have been much dissatisfied with myself since my rudeness of the other evening. I shall have no more peace of mind until you have reconciled me by your forgiveness. The beautiful dancing of yourself and partner excited envy. In the self-blindness of the moment I christened

the bad feeling by the name of philosophy. Dance as charmingly as you will, and be as happy as you will, and with whom you will, I will witness it all, and be a philosopher no more. Only say that you forgive me."

She held out her hand. "Forgive you, my dear sir? That is a word utterly misapplied in this case. If you were to put it to the account of a little jealousy, it would be placing the thing in so flattering a light that any young lady would forgive you of course. But, if it will satisfy you, know that the frankness of this confession places you, at least in my estimation, on as high ground as if you had not sinned. Go, I forgive you. Be a philosopher no more."

This may serve as a specimen of the general order of our recitations for a considerable time. I was sometimes provoked by the insolence of Don De Oli. But he seemed to have his cue and not to be disposed to carry it beyond a certain point. I found him not deficient in capacity. Sometimes, to impress me that this was not the case he would recite his lessons quite well. He once or twice undertook to puzzle me with some perplexing niceties which he had studied out. As soon as he found me thoroughly informed upon the subject, he desisted, and I was troubled from that quarter no more. My other pupils gave me no particular difficulty, and made the customary progress, except one—and her progress was rapid; the task of teaching her was delightful, and was reserved as a dessert to carry down the bitterness of all the rest. My other amusements were walking and riding. I made frequent excursions among the mountains, and often rose early and scaled them, that from their summits I might contemplate the rising sun. I sometimes angled and bathed in the stream, and in these amusements I had more dexterity and success than the inhabitants themselves. Once or twice I rode with the



Conde on his hunting parties. I saw at once that I could never acquire anything like the dexterity of the Spanish in throwing the noose. But my serious amusements at home were my books.

A new source of satisfaction was opening to both Isabel and myself. My previous knowledge of Latin and French, together with a considerable knowledge of the philosophy of languages in general, and, let me bring out the whole truth, an earnest desire to converse with Doña Isabel in a language which flowed from her lips like honey, and sounded on my ear like music, soon made me master of the Spanish. I felt it due to the talents and virtues, as well as to the taste and literature of my fair and amiable pupil, to propose to be guided in my course of reading by her judgment. I perceived that it was a compliment which counted at once, and went directly to the point. She, in her turn, made a surprising progress in English, so much so, that she could converse with me in that language before any of the other pupils could comprehend a sentiment expressed by the words. They might have known a particular word, but if we had chosen, we could have held a confidential conversation in their presence, and nothing but our countenances would have betrayed us. The temptation was great, and almost irresistible to this point. We were both a little guilty in this way, but I can aver, on my conscience, that she trespassed oftener and farther than I did. You may imagine my delight in unfolding to such a pupil the treasures of our great master-minds. But you cannot imagine her eagerness and delight in these employments. I discovered, in fact, from the brewing gloom and ill humor in the countenance of Don De Oli, that he was fully aware of our enjoyments, and that, like the first enemy of man, he was watching to eject us from our paradise. I saw that, in order for the

tranquil continuance of these enjoyments, innocent as they were, we must be more moderate in the indulgence of them. While the countenance of the father Jerome was lengthening and accumulating bitterness in its expressions toward me, my young male pupil made little or no progress, interrupted our most impressive readings with a whistle of contempt, staring at her with an expression of pity, and at me with scorn. I felt that my happiness must soon have a crisis. In a morning conversation at the table he took occasion to express a decided dislike for English. He observed that a foolish notion had controlled him to think of learning it; but that it was a harsh, hissing and vulgar language, fit only to be spoken, as it was, by barbarians. He thence digressed to the people of the States, and he spoke of them with increasing asperity, adding, that the only difficulty in reducing the rebellious Creoles to proper loyalty and submission, arose from the contiguity and the infectious example of the States. Colonel Arredondo, who had acted so efficient a part in putting down the beginnings of disaffection, was present, and endorsed his words. I thought of various replies to these rude remarks, which were evidently personal. They were all bitter, and replies of defiance. I received, too, at the same time, a look of such earnest entreaty from a quarter that I need not mention as caused me to suppress the rising words. I was too content with my situation to commit it by taking notice of remarks which, after all, I was not bound to consider personal. The only reply that I deemed it proper to make, was, by a profound bow of apology to the family of the Conde for leaving the table, by rising, and looking Don De Oli for a moment sternly in the face, and leaving the room.

Fergus informed me that the Conde, who appeared to have been absent when the conversation commenced, and

who only noticed the insulted consciousness with which I left the room, applauded my mode of noticing this rudeness, and observed that whatever they might have thought of my language and country, his personal obligation to me forbade their using such language at his table in my presence, and requested them to abstain from it in the future. He furthermore told me that he had more than once heard the father confessor cautioning the Conde against the influence which I was imperceptibly, as he said, but rapidly gaining over the minds of his wife and daughter. He had heard him warn him that such a course would render him unpopular, and suspicious among the ultra fierce royalists, that it was dangerous to the church thus to retain a heretic of some learning and ingenuity in his family. It is true, he informed me, that the Conde always vindicated me from any sinister designs, and expressed an entire confidence in my honor and fidelity. Even the manner of the Condesa, so tender and maternal, when we were for a moment alone together, and so reserved and silent, when we were before witnesses, boded me no good.

Influenced by these united considerations, I was determined to have an explanation, at least with my fair pupil, and either propose through her a relinquishment of a charge, which seemed likely to produce only dissensions and uneasiness, or at least to propose to her to shorten our readings together. A chance soon offered. I had been in the habit of going through my task with my other pupils first, and reserving the pleasure of hearing this pupil last. Don De Oli had this time made so miserable and stammering attempt at a lesson, a thing he had not attempted before, since I left the breakfast table so abruptly. He sometimes, as I have said, attempted a lesson, that he might show his ability to do it, when he



pleased. The task was of blank verse, and somewhat difficult, and he wholly failed, and failed to evince an effort to succeed. This put him in evident ill humor. Dorothea stumbled, too, and excused herself by taxing me roundly with taking more pains with Isabel than herself, and that for this want of equal attention, she was behind her. The two younger Misses Vonpelt strove hard to recite, and shed childish tears at their failure. The elder one, who had always before shown great sweetness of temper, caught the infectious ill temper, and was stubbornly silent. The young gentleman whistled a while delighted with these murky indications of ill success to my functions, and left the room. The other pupils went out in succession, without the usual civilities of leave. I was left alone with Isabel in the midst of her recitation.

The recitation closed, and before the reading, which generally followed it, as she took the book for the reading, I requested pardon for interrupting the customary order of our present pursuits. "What mean these tears and this rudeness, Doña Isabel?" said I. "I see nothing to justify it. Constructions must have been put upon these exercises, which I see nothing to justify. Where is the wrong? I begin to be afraid that I am fonder of learning Spanish than teaching English. I have a surmise that I am rather longer in my attentions to your lesson than to the rest. It is natural to linger in pleasure, and to hurry through toil. You made me a promise to put me right when you saw me going wrong. The truth is, my conscience tells me, I am partly guilty of Dorothea's charge. I have probably involved you in an unpleasant predicament, as being, through your generous indulgence, an accessory. I have been thinking, Doña Isabel, that my companions about this time are on their return to the United States, and that I had better restore tranquillity to all these ruffled

countenances, and relieve you of all charges of too much kindness toward me, by joining them, and returning to my country."

During these remarks she manifested great agitation, and replied with a voice of deep emotion, which she endeavored to conceal under an appearance of gaiety. "You are now partly kind, sir, and partly unkind. You are kind, very kind, to remind me so gently of my fault, by calling it yours. I will be as frank as you have been. Where you have done badly, I have done worse. I have determined every day to retrench and deny myself. But it seemed so innocent, and so little liable to misconstruction, I have returned to my fault again and again. I love English, that I must confess. I am sensible that I have trespassed on your time and patience. Your language has opened to me a new world, and your beautiful poets have convinced me that I have a new heart. Will you leave me now, in the midst of these enjoyments? You have just opened to me the first pages of the book of knowledge, and have raised the eagerness of desire, and you would now leave me, not enough instructed to read it unaided. We cannot spare you now. The character which my mother has always maintained as belonging to you is beginning to be developed, to convince the doubtful, and to confound your enemies. That you have such, I will not deny, nor that I have heard you traduced. More shame to those who do it so unjustly. Let them go on. Their palpable malice has half convinced my father. In my mother you have a firm friend. Your pupils have behaved badly just now, I admit. But what of that? I dare not tell you what these young ladies think of you, for fear you should become vain. Stay, and triumph over your enemies. It is unworthy of that spirit, of which I have received such memorable proofs, to fly, because your

merit has raised your enemies. I have none too many real friends myself. Oh! if you knew what I have recently suffered!"

It is not altogether an original remark that human nature is a very frail establishment. Those brilliant and spirited eyes, melting in tenderness of persuasion, and fixed upon me, the frank and childlike simplicity of her confidence, and her deep expressions of grief with which she made the last remark, completely vanquished my resolution, and I expressed myself in terms of unwarranted bitterness toward those who could be so base as to cause her suffering. I was vehement, and expressed myself with an ardor that intimated anything rather than the common interest which I must be supposed to feel in her condition.

She looked at me rather with surprise than displeasure, holding up her hands in astonishment. "Look you here!" said she. "This is the philosopher, the pure and dispassionate intelligence that despises dancing. Indeed, sir, this declaration is more flattering than just. It is a truth that a personage, so meritorious and innocent as I am, does suffer just now, and that bitterly. Let us both leave our wrongs out of the question, and see which can suffer with the most dignity and patience—the dancing-hating philosopher, or the untaught, romping Spanish girl, that dearly loves the fandango. Your readiness to fly at the first difficulty, inclines me to think the young lady will vanquish the philosopher in this trial." I answered, "When I know the nature of your sufferings, and from what cause they flow, I can then judge of the equality of the trial." "Oh! I must make you a confidant, then, must I? I am thinking you are rather young, all philosopher as you are, to receive the confessions of a young lady. But I see no impropriety in saying that the man, who the



other morning so rudely caused you to leave the table, is the cause of my suffering. Why should I stint my confidence? They have destined me for him. I have parried the proposition for a long time. Once I was indifferent to him. My feelings, I know not how, have changed, and I now positively detest him. The worst is, that my friends, my father, and even my dear mother, are in the conspiracy against me. They even urge me to an immediate union. They allege the disturbances and dangers of the times; the necessity of an equal aged protector, a man of the same rank, wealth and conditions with myself. They go further. His taciturnity with them is wisdom. His bitterness of temper is honorable sternness. They even sicken me with his praises. To all this, urged again and again, I only reply, that I feel safe; that I would neither wish to leave, nor survive my mother; and that I have a fixed disinclination to any present change in my condition. I strive to gain time. The Virgin Mother forgive me! I dare not tell them that I hate their favorite. Once or twice they have driven me to desperation, and they have heard the truth. But enough of this. I know not what has led me into the folly of telling you my trifling secrets. I mean to be more moderate and discreet in allowing myself the pleasure of reading English. I mean to be patient and prudent. Do you do the same. Shorten my exercises, and prolong those of the rest. Be marked in your civilities to them. How my heart thanked you for conducting yourself in a manner equally forbearing and spirited toward Don De Oli the other morning! Continue this course and you will conquer all. Oh, that the Holy Virgin would touch your heart! Then, ah, then—" she made a pause. "And what then?" I eagerly asked. "Then you might become to me as a brother."

"I implore you," said I, "my dear Isabel, not to put

any of these bribes before me, nor to make any of these tender suppositions, which can never be. I fear I can never change my religion. My convictions upon this point are settled. I should poorly win my claim to more confidence with a mind that weighs character, like yours, by becoming a recreant to my principles. I beseech you not to make me swerve from my course by a kindness which may set my wicked imagination to weaving the threads of a tie, tenderer than of a brother. I must never allow such a fancy, much less give it utterance." "You are right," she replied, "you must neither forget the latter, nor dream of the former. But remain firm to your philosophy. I pleased myself in fancying you were cold, disinterested, dispassionate, and what an excellent casuist you would be to me in cases of conscience and the heart. In short, I promised to find in you a calm and considerate friend and brother. Above all things, I wish you to exercise forbearance toward Don De Oli, and to remain where you are. Things must change for the better. Put the most favorable construction you can upon a confidence which departs so far from the common rules. Alas! whom have I in whom to confide but my mother? And, unhappily, she is in sentiment with my father upon this point."

It is not in man, at least it was not in me, to resist such persuasions, which, however they may seem out of the way in the relation, had, under the circumstances of the case, an air of simple and modest confidence, which, according to my notions of decorum, were in perfect keeping with her whole deportment. My own wrongs were forgotten, and I regarded Don De Oli as another Watook. I was determined that I would remain and endure all, as long as it should be endurable, and that I would devote myself to the welfare of Isabel, in whom I began to admit

to myself that I felt in the full, at least a fraternal interest. And with her frank admission to the claims up to that point, I determined to content myself.

I fear, sir, that I have already wearied you with these milky adventures. I will give you all this stage of my adventures in a mass.

It happened the next day after this conversation with Isabel that Dorothea and the Misses Vonpelt came in for recitation considerably earlier than usual. The library was separated from my apartment, where we recited, by a partition which was pierced in a number of places to admit a free circulation of air, and was screened by Venetian blinds; so a whisper in one apartment was audible in the other. I had set out on my afternoon ride, but something caused me to return. I was in the library when the ladies entered my apartment. I was so situated that I could not escape without making it known that I had heard their conversation. I heard my pupils begin to make me the subject of a confidential chat, premising that they had seen me ride out, and that I would not be back for an hour. I heard enough before I had determined what course I ought to pursue to hold me quiet until I might escape unperceived. I was aware that I would create a most painful surprise if I should open the door and interrupt them.

The conversation began by the Misses Vonpelt inquiring in a whisper if it were certain that I was not in my room. Dorothea affirmed that I was not, for, as she rode into the court yard, she had seen me moving out on horseback. "Besides," she added, "I should not think he could hear from the library, even if he were there. Neither do I believe that he could understand our conversation when we speak in Spanish." Elder Miss Vonpelt: "There you are mistaken. He speaks and understands Spanish



quite well. Love and Isabel have taught him that. Dorothea: "He learns Spanish to a miracle, that is true, and he is a charming fellow. But I vow to the Lady of Lisbon that I believe not a word of his loving Isabel, though it is easy to see, poor thing, that she is dying for him. But she is obliged to take Don De Oli. And I see no reason why she ought not to be satisfied. He is rather solemn and grim, to be sure, but well enough after all. I suppose you have heard the news, that there is another rising in Texas. A great many Americans have come on and have joined the rebels. The Conde has to go and fight them. He insists that his daughter marries before he sets out for the army. The Condesa is in heart with Isabel and against an immediate union, and there has been a great storm in the palace. I think for one that she will never do any better. Jesu! I have seen as pretty as she, though she does give herself such airs. The father confessor is ready to excommunicate her for obstinacy, and Don De Oli swears that she did formerly as good as promise him, that she was ready to go with him to the altar; and he lays all the blame of her obstinacy upon our teacher, and swears, that if the adventurer, as he calls him, does not leave the country, he will call him out and fight him. Some say he will fight, and some say that these people are better to fight Indians than they are to handle a sword and pistol with a gentleman. I wish I knew if there were any love between them. For my part, I always suspect such grave people. Isabel, to be sure, seems to have fire enough, but the other seems an insensible block of wood. I dare say, both of them have their thoughts, as well as other people. At any rate Don De Oli is determined to kill him, or drive him out of the country. They have threatened Isabel every way, poor child; to send her to Spain, to a convent, or to shut her up in the palace on

bread and water." Second Miss Vonpelt: "Poor Isabel! I am sorry for her! It must be dreadful to marry where one does not love. We must all allow that Isabel is a sweet girl and prettier than any of us. And as for our teacher, he is a divine young man. Certainly Isabel is an exception. But leave her out and we must allow that the Germans and Americans are much handsomer than the Spaniards. I was at Chihuahua, and saw those fine fellows who came with Captain Pike. I could never endure a swarthy Spaniard for a husband after seeing such men." Dorothea, looking in the glass: "I vow, Miss Vonpelt, you are very complimentary. Maybe you forget that I am a fullblooded Spaniard myself. I bless the Virgin, my father allows me to do just as I please. This poor fellow of ours has no money. Now would it not be a generous thing to take him myself. I have wealth enough for us both. I have done everything to let him see that I did not dislike him. But he is an astonishing block, and will not take a hint." Elder Miss Vonpelt: "My father is as rich as yours, and allows me as much liberty, and Saxons and Americans are much more alike than the Spaniards and Americans. I hate Don De Oli! the bloody-minded wretch, to drive away our master or kill him. I hope that if they do fight that Don De Oli will fall. Do you think he will fight, Dorothea?" "I dare say he will. But if he should, these Americans have an eye and a hand as steady and as true as steel. It is just as likely that he kills Don De Oli, and then I am sure he will get Isabel for the prize. Now, to tell the plain truth, I do not value English a fig, and I am sure I shall never learn it. What's the use? He talks French, and you say he can talk Spanish. I vow to the Virgin, I love to look at him, and that's just what I come here for; and *you* are here for the same purpose. How is it, that Isabel has

already learned to hiss in the horrid language? Is it not strange that the language should be so harsh and the men so handsome?"

I heard a great deal more of this sort of childish prattle, and from it I gathered that Isabel was more severely pressed to a union with Don De Oli than she had informed me; that I might expect to be treated by him with more rudeness than I had been; and, more important than all the rest, that there was an insurrection in Texas. The talk ended by my fair pupils proposing to take a walk in the garden before recitation. The moment they retired I retreated too, and, by a circuitous direction, came into my room as if from abroad, leaving them entirely ignorant of what flattering secrets I had been compelled to hear.

This recitation passed off as usual, except that Don De Oli did not attend it. The young ladies apologized for their rudeness and negligence of the former day. They attributed it to chagrin for not having learned their tasks. They promised better attention for the future. As we had agreed, I devoted but little time to Isabel, and more than usual to the rest, and the exercises went off with apparent satisfaction upon all sides.



## CHAPTER X.

## THE THUNDER STORM.

SOME time after this I had still further confirmation of what was passing at the palace respecting me. I wished to visit a young Englishman, who was much esteemed, and who had been dangerously wounded by the unexpected explosion of a blast which he was superintending in the adjacent mines. Fergus rode with me to show me the way. As soon as we had cleared the park he addressed me in a voice which trembled with affectionate concern. "Now God and St. Patrick touch the heart of yer honor, and make ye a true Roman." "Why that prayer, Fergus?" "Because, yer honor, Father Jerome, blast his black face! nas set all the big people against ye. He tells them ye are a bad heretic, as knowing as the devil; and that ye will make all the people rebels. He makes ye a kind of Orangeman. The Indians and all the small folks like ye all the better for it. But there is no help here. For the king's men just whip ye up for nothing, and plunge ye a thousand fathoms in the mines for nothing but a word. And these folks have the upper hand now. And so the Conde, to please the big folks, and the father, and the young Don, and all, have published, that unless ye turn round and become a true Roman, and

swear for the king, he will send ye packing. Yer land is a free one, and if ye go home, unless ye are pleased to beat me back, Fergus goes with ye." "My good friend," said I, "I have hardly the means of taking care of myself, but if I leave here, I certainly will return to my own free and happy country, where every honest man does as he pleases, and where an industrious and active lad can hardly fail of finding profitable and independent employment." "Ay," said he, "that's the country for me. Here there's but a word and a blow, and the blow comes first. But it will please yer honor to hear that Isabel, God bless her bright eyes! pleaded hard for ye, and said as how an honest man could not change his religion at once and just when he had a mind to. The jewel and her mother had a great deal to say for you. Finally, the Conde got his blood up and looked cross, this way; and swore that he had done enough to please her whims and those of her mother; that his mind was fixed, and that he meant to try another hand with ye and with them. He looked more grim and bitter than I ever saw him before, and ordered his daughter out of the room."

Fergus continued to give me details of this sort until we arrived at a most beautiful spot at the foot of the mountains, from which burst forth great numbers of clear and beautiful springs. In a large grove of catalpas and white walnut, through which ran a rivulet, formed by the union of these springs, was one of those green stone cottages, of which I have spoken. Here, Fergus informed me, lived the young man whom I came to visit. I knocked and was admitted at once. On a clean mattress, in a room neat and cool lay the unfortunate young man whose wounds, it was feared, would prove fatal. He had a manly face, of the finest expression. His neck and breast were blackened with gunpowder. He appeared to be in great

agony, and the noble efforts which he made to suppress the expression of it before his mother, gave his countenance a striking moral interest. His mother seemed to be between forty and fifty, and her countenance bore the impress and the trace of former beauty. No language can paint the maternal affection, apprehension and suspense with which she bent over the feverish and agonized form of her only son. I told her in a low voice who I was, and that having heard of her son's misfortune, and though not of his country, yet speaking the same language and entertaining for him the sympathies of a fellow countryman, I had come in the hope that he would allow me to sit with him, to watch with him, or in some way to be serviceable to him or her. I felt affected with the spectacle before me, and whenever the heart is moved the tone and the words catch the emotion. All the mother's heart was expressed in the earnestness of her thanks. "You are thrice welcome to my poor son," said she, as she fondly grasped my hand. "It will do him good to hear his own language spoken by one so nearly his own age." After I had assisted her to raise him, while she arranged his dressings, after she had informed me how he had received his wounds, she proceeded to tell her own short, but sad story. "My husband came out from England with an hydraulic machine for throwing water from the mines. We were entirely in a region of strangers, both to our language and religion. But the place was delightful, the scenery inspiring and the people kind. So long as my dear husband was with me, I knew no want of society or friends. We obtained a comfortable income. We had the good opinion of the Conde, and everything went well with us. We had but this son. He was trained to the same employment with his father, who lived to see him able to take his place. The damp of the



mines affected his health. He took the fever of the country and died. I was stupefied, reckless, almost mindless for months. Even this sweet scenery, which memory still paints as it was when my husband was with me, became tame and gloomy. I was sure that the world had died to me, and I to the world. I mourned in secret places; and now I feel that it was the insane and impious grief which rises against that decree, which is as righteous as it is unchangeable. God, who is rich in mercy, bore, with His own divine forbearance, this my repining spirit. I arose from my stupefaction and struggled with myself, and I prayed and communed with God, and became gradually composed, and the spirit of peace revisited my bosom. This dear son began to be to me as the husband I had lost. He came forward, considerate, virtuous, industrious and respected by the people. Yesterday the second blow was struck. My Heavenly Father saw that my idolatrous leaning upon the father was about to be transferred to the son. It may be that God will look upon this my extreme affliction and will stay His hand with this solemn warning. And oh! if He will be pleased to spare this my dear son, I here promise, as soon as he shall recover, to strive not to love him more than I ought. There is nothing on earth in which to trust but God."

Nothing soothes the agony even of pain like true sympathy and tenderness of heart. I looked on this poor widow's all. We shed tears, the mother, son and stranger, together. I sat behind the young man, sustaining him half raised on his pillow, and was bathing his head and chafing his temples with aromatic vinegar, and the mother was fanning him, and dropping silent tears, when the door opened and Doña Isabel entered without being announced. The Conde, she said, had come out to look at a new mine. He had sent by Isabel, who felt no disposition to pass by

this scene of sorrow, the preparations of the family physician for his wounds. Her steps instinctively led her to the abode of misery. She requested that she might be set down at the foot of the hills, whence she walked up to the widow's cottage, to be called for on the return of the Conde in the evening.

The day was a holiday from the usual English custom, and it may be supposed that the surprise of two such persons, who seldom saw each other, except in the presence of prejudiced spies, thus to be sure of the greater part of a day together, and unsuspected, was a pleasant one. Two circumstances occurred to open both our hearts. We were in a scene of sorrow, peculiarly calculated to open the heart, and we were both sufficiently apprised that these interviews must be of short duration. I may add, that I knew enough of her ardent and affectionate character to know what effect it would have upon her to see me so occupied. And if ever beauty, united with all the advantageous circumstances of worldly estimation, is irresistible, it is when the eye first melts in sympathetic participation with pain and woe, and is suffused with tears of unaffected pity. I discovered, by the first affectionate look of recognition, that this was not the first time Isabel had been there. I saw, too, by a transient look, that she thought well of that part of my religion, which led me to spend my holiday in the abode of sickness and sorrow. She said but a few words to the poor widow, but it was the look that accompanied those words, which went to my heart. The young man next received her attention. She gave him some drops of cordial, and was particular about telling the mother all that the physician had said and prescribed in the case. The drops were given immediately, and I raised him, and with the assistance of his mother we applied to his wounds these applications, which operated almost im-

mediately in allaying his anguish. Soon he was in a refreshing sleep, the first he had had since receiving his wounds.

It was natural that the mother's heart should open to confidence and hope, and while she spoke of the extreme forlornness and destitution in which his being taken away would leave her, Isabel replied, "My dear madam, he must, and, I trust, he will recover. Everything that nursing and medical aid can do we will have done. I hope there is no ground for apprehension. But even if things should go different from our hopes, as long as I am here and have the means of aiding you, you will have a daughter, if not a son. You know whether you may depend upon my promise." Who can trace the effect of such eyes glistening with sympathetic tears? I felt to my cost, what it was upon me. I perceived a certain swelling of the heart, which I was sure was love. "This, then," said I, "is that terrible disorder, as obstinately fixed upon me, as I was supposed to be upon all my determinations." Never had I watched a conversation with such an intense interest as that of this blooming girl, so amply endowed with means of kindness and aid.

The Conde was not expected to return until evening. Fergus was occupied in arranging the barn and enclosures. The mother was in the kitchen preparing supper. The patient slept. The intense heat of the sun was mitigated by passing clouds and a pleasant breeze. "Why should we not walk," asked Isabel, "in that beautiful grove? I wish to show you what a strength of beauty and vegetation we have here among these springs at the base of these mountains. The trees, plants, shrubs and flowers meet here. The fountains which trickle from the foot of the hills irrigate the various tribes of vegetation and give them a delicious verdure and coolness. Here are the fa-



vorite haunts of the redbird, mocking bird, parroquet, and myriads of other birds with most beautiful plumage. Let us walk and enjoy the coolness and the scenery." And we walked under trees, every one of which was prodigal of harmony. Around us every thing was beauty and repose, but heavy thunder, the clouds of which were not yet visible, rolled among the mountains. The bold eagle and the falcon raised their screams, and were soaring in the blue above their loftiest summits. My fair companion seemed to have laid aside her reserve and distant manner. She spoke in English, and quoted Shakespeare with an enunciation that brought a new meaning to every phrase. I, too, had my quotations, and to tell you the plain truth, we were both verging rapidly toward that confidential conversation, which both of us seemed to have a presentiment would be our last. I cannot remember how we arrived at the point, but we had imperceptibly begun to say civil things to each other, and to regret the want of opportunities to talk with a little more freedom. Isabel expressed herself with great energy upon the beauty of the day, place, and admitted that she had never enjoyed a walk so much. She quoted from Othello, that if I had a friend, let him desert the frivolous pursuits of young men, and turn aside on a holiday, to comfort and nurse a sick young man, the only son of his mother, and she a widow—let me bring such a friend to such a place, and that would woo her.

Upon the hint, the same purpose with Othello's, sprang to my lips; but prudence and honor laid their injunctions upon me, and suppressed the expression of it. I only observed that when I saw such a friend standing on a precipice, with temptations almost too strong for human nature to resist, I should advise him, if honor or duty placed a single obstacle in the way of winning the prize,

not to woo it, but to fly. "In truth," said I, "Doña Isabel, if I had not made a firm covenant with myself, it would not be safe for me to be here." A long and foolish silence ensued, each waiting for the other to begin the conversation again. She resumed first, by remarking, that she had been introduced, just before her embarkation, to the splendid courts of Ferdinand VII. "I was very young, though I had the customary share of compliments and attention. But with what different sensations did my youthful imagination expatiate in the scene of splendor and dissipation, from the calm satisfaction of comforting the desolate heart of this poor widow, and walking in this sweet place, contemplating this grand and sublime nature above and around us; seeing those gay birds, dressed still more gaudily than the ladies of that court; hearing that distant thunder echo in the mountains; feeling myself secure in the society of the man, who has opened to me a new and interesting page in the book of knowledge, in having taught me his language; and finding myself here with him, both led by the impulse to do good, and who feels on so many points in common with myself." I replied, by applauding her taste, and saying, that although poets were not the less true, that there was no real and healthful enjoyment, that would at once satisfy and last, but that which proceeded from truth and nature. That we can be happy, let divines and poets say what they may, I know and feel. Let the past and the future be blotted from the records of memory. I can live long and happy on the remembrance of this day. "And I, too," she replied, "have been so happy, that I want words to express my feelings. I have felt before this, that certain places and scenes, and even a certain temperature of the air, must concur with the tone of our thoughts and feelings, to pro-

duce high enjoyment. What a beautiful canopy of shade! How grand those distant peals of thunder! And yet what repose and tranquillity about us! Scarcely a leaf trembles to disturb the singing of the birds. This place, I should think, would almost suggest thoughts of love to one who holds himself above the joys and pursuits of the vulgar. What beautiful verses were those which you read to me the other day from Wordsworth. See if I quote them correctly:

*“Love had he learn’d in cots where poor men lie,  
His daily teachers had been woods and rills;  
The silence that is in the starry sky,  
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.”*

“I have often heard my companions talk with a foolish cant about woods and solitudes, and love and cottage. Nothing is more disgusting to me than the affected fondness for these things, as nothing is more delightful than the real, deep, and cordial relish for them. How many times have I suppressed emotions of this sort, struggling for utterance lest I should be thought extravagant and romantic.”

While we were conversing, the thunder, which had been rolling at a distance in the mountains, approached nearer. The peals were more frequent, and the echoes more awful. The brassy edges of clouds rolled together, and sweeping forward, like the smouldering pillows of smoke from some mighty conflagration, were seen lowering from the heights, and beginning to cover the sun. Gleams of lightning darted far into the regions of the atmosphere, that were as yet of cloudless blue. The crash that followed interrupted our conversation. “Hark,” said she, “what terrible peals of thunder!” and she clung involuntarily to my arm.



I asked her if she were accustomed to be frightened at thunder. She answered, "Not with thunder storms of a common character. But I have been so happy, and have enjoyed these hours so much, that I know not why, at this moment I feel not precisely terror, but as your poet says, 'awestruck.' How grand and how awful are the forms and foldings of those clouds, 'tempest o'er tempest rolled.' Why is it, that in such perfect repose of the heart, and such delightful exercises of its best affections, images of terror and destruction should bring with them peculiar alarm? It is in these moments, when we feel in the highest degree our capabilities of enjoyment, that the idea of death strikes me with chill and fear."

By this time the horizon was covered. There was a rushing sound in the air, and we were reluctantly compelled to return to the house. The thunder storms of the northern regions seldom give an idea of the assemblage of terrific accompaniments, belonging to a severe one in the tropics. A thick mist fills all the distance between the earth and the clouds. A dim and yellowish twilight throws a frightful tinge upon the objects around. This storm was tremendous. The commencement was in the stillness of death, and the burst of the wind was as instantaneous as the crash of the thunder. The rain did not descend in drops, or in sheets, but the terrible phenomenon of the bursting of the clouds upon the mountains took place. The roar of the new formed torrents and cascades, pouring from the mountains, mingled with that of the rain, thunder and winds. The atmosphere was a continued and lurid glare of lightning, which threw a portentous brilliance through the descending waters and the darkness of the storm. Many a tree, that had stood unscarred for ages, was stripped from its top to its roots by the descending fires of the

sky. The people, used as they were to thunder storms, were appalled by the fury of this. The sick young man, aroused from his sleep, rested his head upon his hand, and his pains seemed to be suspended, while he contemplated the uproar and apparent conflagration of the elements abroad. A blaze of lightning filled the room, and the thunderbolt fell upon a vast cypress but a few feet from the house. The shock was so violent, that each one sitting in the room was thrown from his seat. As we recovered from the blow, we saw how naturally, in such moments, each one flies to the object in which he has the most confidence. The mother sprang to the arms of her son, and Isabel, at the same moment, clung to my side. The scene, so terrific to them, was to me, one of the grandest in nature. I enjoyed the darkness and commotion of the storm. All the energies of my nature were awakened. I would have been willing that such peals should have been repeated every minute, so that the bolt did not fall on the house. The impulse which had led Isabel to fly to me in the moment of danger, was the most unequivocal proof I had yet experienced, that I was not indifferent to her. Here the heart had spoken; but the moment of recovered self-possession replaced the paleness of surprise and terror with blushes of consciousness. The entire calmness, which I felt and vowed, drew from them expressions of astonishment, almost reproach. But it gradually communicated composure to the rest. We resumed our seats in a kind of tranquil astonishment, as the storm gradually subsided. The thunder still rolled sublimely, but at a greater distance. The blue of the atmosphere began to show itself at the zenith. The clouds rolled away toward the east, and the sun came forth in his brightness, just above the smoking summit of the hills. The scene, which was terrific in the fury of the storm,

was now an indescribable mixture of beauty and grandeur. Frequent gleams of the most vivid lightning played on the extremities of the clouds, rolled together, pile above pile, like precipices of brass. White pillows of mist arose from the earth. The birds welcomed the return of the sun, and the renewed repose of nature, with a thousand mingled songs. Occasionally, a louder peal of thunder made the cottage tremble to its foundation, and the roar of the torrents that the shower had made in the mountains, sounded like distant tones of an organ.

The young man was revived by the cheering freshness of the atmosphere, and that balmy odor and richness of the earth and sky, after such a rain. We sat at the door of the cottage, looking abroad upon the scene, and inhaling the breeze too full at heart, at least two of us, for anything but silence and interior enjoyment. We were aroused from our pleasant reverie, by the rattling of the Conde's carriage. Isabel turned pale, as she saw that we were discovered together. There was no retreat. The family had not known that I was to visit there, and the meeting had too much the appearance of having been preconcerted. This appearance was strengthened by the evident perturbation in her face. Even the countenance of the Condesa, as she came in, had an unwonted expression of severity. The Conde, the priest, and Don De Oli, each reddened with undisguised resentment. The physician was with them, and while he and the Conde were examining the case of the young man, and the Condesa was engaged in conversation with the widow, Don De Oli requested me to walk abroad with him. The very manner in which he made the request was an affront. However extraordinary the request, and the manner in which he made it, I saw no reason why I should decline. I foresaw, in fact, the course our conversation would



assume. It did not contribute to my composure, to notice that his request had been noticed by the Condesa and her daughter, and that they were both as pale as death as I went out.

We were scarcely clear of the cottage before he began in Spanish. "Sir, it is full time that you and I have an explanation." I begged him to proceed, and tell upon what subject. "You know too well," he replied, "the subject I mean. I have had good reasons to complain before, but have forbore, till your conduct is no longer endurable. I find you here in company with Doña Isabel. The meeting is evidently preconcerted. When a young lady of her rank and standing so degrades herself, whatever may be her share of the fault and folly, I shall consider you answerable for the whole. You are perfectly aware of my right to interfere in this case. You must be equally aware, that at this stage of your stay in a family where an accident has given you claims that you seem disposed to prosecute to the utmost, seeking opportunities of private interviews with that lady must be as unpleasant and offensive to her parents as it is affronting to me. You seem to have imposed upon her gratitude, and subsequently, to have weakened her reason and good sense, to the point of inducing her to dishonor her noble name and family. The parents have finally seen the error in allowing themselves to be influenced by the foolish fancies of their daughter. They propose a summary way of bringing this affair to a crisis. But it is my cause, and I propose to take it into my own hands. I waive all objections to you on the score of birth, standing and character. If you are the undoubted chevalier, which you are estimated to be from one unfortunate adventure, you will meet me, and we will decide our pretensions to the young lady in question, in the proper way. If you refuse, she

will at least see the true nature of the heroism of her chivalrous and heretical champion. You understand me, sir?"

"Yes," I answered, somewhat bitterly. "Your head, heart and language are but too easily comprehended. In the first place, sir, you have no right to tax me in this way. I respect myself too much, and you too little, to vindicate myself, or obviate your charges. I owe it to Doña Isabel, however, still more than to myself, for I would not refer to it on my own account, to affirm on my honor, that no knowledge of her intended visit induced me to come, and that if I had known that she would have been here, I should not have come myself. For the rest, sir, whether I am brave, or not, it becomes not me to say. It is contrary to my settled principles, if you please, to fight a duel. No temptation shall induce me, no provocation goad me, to violate my principles. Doña Isabel, and every other person, will think me chevalier, or not, as they choose. I will not meet you in that way. Even upon your calculations, in staking our lives upon this issue, I do not estimate the stakes to be equal. Whatever difference fortune has made between us, I have always felt myself, I will not say so much above you, but so different from you, that all your attempts to insult me, have been, and are now utterly unavailing."

This I said in good set Spanish. It seemed equally to rouse his confidence and his rage. He seemed to have had some modest apprehension that I would fight him. When they were removed, his insolence knew no bounds. He poured out terms corresponding to the words, poltroon, coward, scoundrel, etc., in rapid succession, and told me, that if he did not fear the interference of the family, he would chastise me on the spot. I was wholly unarmed, but in bodily strength much his superior. I advanced

near him, and directly in front, eyeing him sternly. "Sir," said I, "that is another affair. Nothing will provoke me to be the aggressor, and nothing will make me swerve from my purpose not to fight you. Attempt the least personal violence, and, sir, I have principles for the emergency. Touch me, sir, and you will know in a moment the power of my muscles, and I have a surmise, that one experiment would satisfy you forever." In his trembling hands, and in his pale face, and a kind of impulse to retreat, I saw he was not nerved to the point of immediate contest. He retired, uttering as he went, the terms "loquacious coward," and entered the cottage, and the family soon after took their leave. I entered the cottage, and repeated my offers of watching and aid, received the affectionate and cordial thanks of the widow, and followed the carriage at a distance.

On my return, I learned from Fergus, that Don De Oli had been particular to have them know that he had challenged me, and that I had refused to fight him. "And," said he, "God bless yer honor, but it has turned the Conde's heart still more against ye. Every tongue wags upon the subject, but Isabel's, and she, the jewel, just turned her face and looked t'other way. Everybody fights here when he is asked. Ah! by St. Patrick, had it been me, yer honor, that he had been asking that way, he should have tasted my shillalah, anyhow. I see clearly that yer honor will have to give up the business of learning them English, and leave the family. Maybe it is not yer way of doing business. Even the jewel herself would have thought none the less of ye for giving that whelp a basting."

Thus I saw that even the kind hearted Fergus had been carried away by their prejudices, and chilled against me for refusing to fight. You must be perfectly aware how



strongly the current sets in in this region against a young man who refuses a challenge. Even the few who profess to act under the influence of the Gospel evidently grow cold toward a person who has been known to have refused a challenge. I no longer disguised from myself that I loved Isabel with all my soul. I flattered myself that I was loved in return, and persons at that time of life will conjecture visions of hope. I knew her heart and the excellence of her understanding, and the correctness of her moral feelings, and yet I hardly dared to hope. It was a reflection of the greatest bitterness, that I should, after all, be banished from the palace, my pursuit, and Isabel, by my avowed enemy from the first. I found it hard, and even impossible to tranquillize my feelings by recurring to my principles. I thought with the vanquished Brutus, "O, virtue, I have worshiped thee as a real divinity, and I find thee but an empty name." We rode on in silence, for even Fergus, having had his say, rode beside me without uttering a word.

As we approached the river, near the palace, the twilight was fast fading away. The carriage might be in advance a quarter of a mile. I heard a loud shriek of terror and distress. We put spurs to our horses, and were on the banks of the river in a moment. Our arrival was at a critical time for the family. The carriage and all that were in it had been carried away by the stream. The coach door was closed, and the Conde, his lady, and their daughter were drowning, without the possibility of escape. The attendant servants on horseback and the physician had crossed by swimming, and were crying for help on the other side. The priest, with a more reverend care for his health, or with an earlier foresight of the danger, had cleared himself of the carriage and hung fast to the roof. Don De Oli, too, had been in season to escape, and had

floated down the current, until he had seized a long branch, which waved up and down, and sometimes sunk him quite under the water. He and the priest appeared to strive which could bawl the most lustily for help. The servants answered all their cries by still louder shrieks, by crossing themselves, and making vows to our Lady of the Pillar. I stripped myself to my pantaloons in a moment, plunged into the foaming current, and found the advantage of being an expert swimmer. The horses were already sunk and drowned, and the carriage, impeded in its downward course by swinging against a clump of small trees in the stream, just sunk the party shut up in it up to their chins, and sometimes under water, according to the waving of the bushes. The priest on the top of the carriage begged me for the love of God and the Virgin, to give him the first deliverance. I disregarded his cries, and was obliged to dive in order to get to the latch on the door. I soon rescued the Conde, who was nearest the door, and was not so exhausted but that he was able to swim ashore. I then drew out the Condesa and her daughter, who both clung to me at once, and I was in danger of being drowned with them. I disengaged their hands and pushed them from me at my arm's length. They, disengaged from me, clung to each other. I grasped the robe of the mother with one hand, and with the other I wafted them ashore almost half drowned and unconscious. To some in my situation, it would almost furnish amusement to hear the lusty cries of my two friends in the stream. As Don De Oli seemed to be in the greatest danger, I proposed to rescue him first. I rested a moment on the bank to recover breath, and then plunged in. He had, as I have remarked, enormous black whiskers. I remembered his recent insult. I twisted my fingers in the curls of his whiskers, by which I had the finest management of him,

and in this manner I fished this young limb of the Spanish nobility safely from the stream.

The father alone remained on top of the carriage, and was now apparently sinking. His cries of "Help! murder! I drown!" were interrupted by loud and earnest recitations of the prayers of his church to the Virgin. I took one end of a handkerchief, and gave him the other to hold, and in this way I brought him off safe. The father, mother and daughter had already been conveyed to the house. Don De Oli had suffered so much from fright and the water he had swallowed that he had to be aided. The priest had suffered in no other way than through fright. On the road to the house, I was informed that the coachman drove down to the usual ford. The horses had been accustomed to pass it so frequently, that they plunged into it without observing that it was a furious current. Just below the ford, a bar reached across the stream. The horses were frightened with the unusual fury and foaming of the current, and plunged, and were immediately carried over the bar, and the disaster happened in this way.



## CHAPTER XI.

## THE HERETIC.

THE following morning I had a visit in my own room from the Conde before breakfast. He saluted me gravely and with great deference. "You are an astonishing man," said he, "and if I believed in destiny, I should be compelled to suppose that fate had somehow united the influence of your star with mine. You may not have known that I have suffered among my best, in fact, my only friends, for retaining in my family such a young man, a heretic, a republican, of the same nation, and participating the same sentiments, no doubt, with men who are now united with the rebellious Creoles in an insurrection against my government. I have vindicated your integrity. I have indignantly repelled charges against you, as a dangerous man. I have urged obligations of such a nature as could never be repaid. With respect to fears from another quarter, they might be excusable in Don De Oli, but I would hope that nothing could ever influence my daughter to do violence to her standing and religion by the thought of a misalliance. You have been made aware how incompatible we have considered your nation, religion and condition of life with mine. I feel it necessary to be perfectly frank with you. I have admired your character, at the same time I entertained these views. I have suf-

ferred so much from suspicion, my government having had to encounter charges diametrically opposite, and the father and Don De Oli have had so much to say against your residence here, that I had yesterday, after seeing you with my daughter at the widow's cottage, determined to break with you, and dismiss you. I found on inquiry of her that this meeting was merely accidental. Returning from that meeting, you have triumphed over us again. We appear to be plunged into danger only to bring you to our rescue. It was a noble return to Don De Oli for the insult of an hour before. I owe you my life in common with the rest. Even the father admits that he is ashamed to see you. My wife and daughter are quite recovered this morning. Our proverb says that 'Words are wind.' I am so peculiarly situated that I know not how to frame words to thank you. If money would discharge my obligation, and you would receive it, I would soon wipe out the score. We all feel as we ought, and you should place all our distrust of you merely to circumstances, and our peculiar position. Shall I be still plainer? My daughter probably feels too much, though, as I have said, I have no fears that either of you would depart from the decorum expected from both. She is my all, the apple of my eye. There is not an alliance that fits us in all this government but that of Don De Oli. He is rich, noble, brave, and stands high in the favor of the government, of the same race and religion, in short, compatible in every respect. I grant you to be worthy in the endowments of nature, but I need not contrast you with him in some particulars. My first object ought to be my own fame and honor. The next dearest point on earth is, to see my daughter united to Don De Oli, to continue my race and honors when I am no more. I put it to yourself to weigh these circumstances. These evil times, upon which we are fallen, give them an invincible pressure at

this time. It distresses me to tell you that I was forewarned the result of permitting your stay in my family. I flattered myself that my daughter would see all these things as I see them. I perceive that I mistook, from a blind confidence in her pride. You have been too long and too intimately known to her for her repose. I acquit you from my heart of everything that is not perfectly correct and honorable in your intercourse with her. But if you were to leave now, even after you have saved her a second time, she is but a woman, and time will operate upon her as on the rest. The peace and honor of my family are now in your hands. I have tried you sufficiently upon the score of compensation. I can offer you nothing, and you must rest satisfied with the applause of your own heart. And in your country, which I believe to be as you represent it, great and rising, such a mind as yours cannot fail to find its place, and meet its reward. Were you a royalist and a Catholic, untitled and without a *peso*, you should fight Don De Oli, for I do not believe that you want courage, and you should be my son-in-law. I can only mourn as it is, your unchangeable perseverance, and leave you to infer my wishes."

The undisguised and frank admissions of the Conde placed the only course clearly to my view. I might regret as bitterly as I would the obstacles of prejudice, nation, birth, wealth and religion. But these obstacles were not the less real, or unchangeable. My conscience admitted that they existed everywhere. I painfully felt that I loved Isabel, but I hope that I love honor and duty more. I admitted, then, to him in reply, that I had stayed too long in the family, if not for his daughter's peace, at least for my own; that I was well aware of all the obstacles of which he had been pleased to remind me, but that I was no swindling adventurer to take advantage of his con-



fidence; and that I would repair my fault as fast as possible, by leaving his family and returning to my own country, never, I hope, to leave it again. I assured him that my residence for even this short time in his country had learned me one great practical lesson, and that was, suitably to prize everything that appertained to my own.

He politely tried to disguise his joy at this determination, and the old topic of compensation was resumed, and disposed of as formerly. I felt no unwillingness to receive under the name of salary, a sufficient sum to enable me to return to the United States. I confess that the thought more than once flashed across my mind of joining the patriots; but my only clear and fixed purpose was, to return home. My departure was fixed to take place in three days from that time, and I somewhat sternly requested the Conde that during that time I might not meet the members of a family where I seemed to be so dangerous, and that I might be served in my own apartment. He appeared to feel much mortified, that a person who had rendered him such signal services should seem to be driven, without compensation and almost in disgrace, from his family. The father, he understood, since the affair of last evening, had felt a more earnest desire to converse with me on the subject of religion. Possibly he might present views of the subject which had never occurred to me, as I admitted that I was very little acquainted with the points in dispute between their church and ours. If I should yet see cause to change my religion, all his views in regard to my departure might be reversed. He requested me to receive the father with a docile mind, and a heart open to conviction. He promised to ascribe my departure to motives most honorable to me, and to notify my other pupils accordingly, and then left me.

In establishments like this news flies rapidly. Every person in and about the house knew in half an hour that I was to leave them shortly. If I might estimate my standing here by the conduct of these amiable people, I had been a personage of no small consideration in the palace. These people are naturally affectionate, and there was a strife among them who should render me the most kindness. The affectionate Fergus had tears in his eyes when he brought in my breakfast. "God bless yer honor," said he, "ye ought to kill the swaggering young Don, and instead of that, ye are going to break the heart of Isabel. Satan roast them all but her. Don't ye save their lives once and again, and drag out the young Don by the whiskers, and the father, devil roast him! like a drowning rat there from the top of the coach, and what do they do, but drive ye out of the house like a mad dog? Be Jasus! ye have only to say one mass, and scorch the whiskers of the puppy, and ye will be cock of the roost, after all. By St. Patrick, yer honor, Isabel is worth that much and then I will serve ye forever and the day after. At any rate, if ye are wilful about saying the mass, as it is like ye, go where ye will, if ye will let me, I go with ye, and I have told them all as much." "Certainly, Fergus," said I, "you may go with me if you choose; but I have been used to serving myself, and have no use for a servant, and no means to maintain one; but if you choose to connect yourself with my fortunes, I will always do the best I can for you." "That's all I want," said he, "and you shall see if I am any loss to you. As for money, Isabel and her mother, the kind souls, have taken care to provide for that case. Isabel says to me, 'Go with him, Fergus;' and the tears fell from her eyes like rain; 'and if you love Isabel show it by being kind to him and taking good care of him.' And she put into my hand a bag, so

heavy and full of doubloons, and she said, 'Fergus, put it in your trunk, and apply the money to his use, for the sake of Isabel and the Holy Virgin.' So, yer honor sees, there is no want of money at all, at all."

After breakfast I took my accustomed walk, and in the course of it I was joined by Father Jerome. His manner toward me was wholly changed. The haughty distance, with which he had hitherto treated me, was converted into the most winning suavity, which he knew so well how to assume. He reverted, with the politest expressions of thanks, to the scene of the evening before, remarking that he had now another reason to wish my conversion, since he understood that I was about to return to the land of licentiousness and heresy, and that his sense of right told him that the most worthy return he could render me for having saved his life was for him in return to attempt to save my life in eternity. "Do you feel docile, my son?" "Certainly, holy father," I answered; "I shall only ask as much patience and teachableness from you if I find anything to reply to in your arguments." "Listen, then," said he, "and I will condense my views of the subject as much as possible.

"It is admitted by your teachers that the Holy Roman Catholic Church is that form of doctrine and discipline transmitted by Christ to His apostles. The fathers were all of this church. No other was thought of for a long succession of centuries. A few wild and transient heresies, indeed, sprang up in different ages of that period, but so wild that they fell by their own absurdities, or were dispersed before the wholesome instructions of our church like chaff before the wind. Our church was clearly and indisputably the church universal, down to those times of ignorance, heresy and misrule which you call the Reformation. We have, then, the most appropriate sanction



which can belong to this subject, antiquity, in our favor. Compared with the age of your church, all your new-born heresies are but as the prophet's gourd, the birth of a night, and to die in a night. We have in our church the keys of the kingdom, and of death, and hell. Christ said unto us, 'On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' When He thus laid the cornerstone of our edifice He gave the keys to St. Peter, to be transmitted down through the church universal in the hands of the Holy Father, as the lawful successor of St. Peter. He opens and no man shuts; and shuts and no man opens. We are in no danger of your heresies and wild mistakes, for we have an infallible interpretation of the Scriptures in the expoundings of an infallible church. Christ promised to be with His church to the end of the world, to enlighten and guide it into all truth; and the proof that this promise is always fulfilling, is, that our church is, and has been one, entire, and identically the same in all ages, countries and conditions of the world. The same prayers are recited, the same doctrines taught, the same venerable rites solemnized in the Vatican, in the Indies, in Africa, in the wildernesses of the New World; the same extreme unction now infuses confidence, joy and peace into the departing soul of the obedient son of the church in this day as it did in the times of the first Christian emperors. Thus we transmit a wholesome and unchangeable doctrine, consoling sacraments, and an undivided faith from age to age. While the dying penitent is uttering *Ex profundis* here, he knows that hundreds of the faithful departing, of all languages and climes are uttering the same words.

"What is the fruit of your so-called Reformation? A thousand sects of wild and gloomy fanaticisms, with names too barbarous to be translated into Catholic Spanish and

Latin. The very catalogue of your heresies is the most horrible vocabulary that ever yet found its way through the organs of speech. Such are the fruits of a thousand ignorant and presumptuous founders of sects, interpreting the Scriptures for themselves, the multiplication of sects upon sects, until in the midst of doubt, wrangling and disputation, the great mass of the people end in unbelief. Look, my son, at our rites. How awful and imposing! See our priests giving the consecrated wafer, and uttering the sublime words, 'Depart, Christian soul!' Behold the countenance of the penitent, who feels all the tranquillity of pardoned sin, brightening with faith, hope and love, the moment before it is rendered unchangeable in death. You charge us with the worship of images. We deny the charge and throw it back in the face of its inventors. We venerate the Redeemer, and the mother of Christ, and the saints. We have preserved by holy and primitive paintings, their countenances as they were in the flesh. Instead of reserving them for the private chamber, or the cabinet alone, we place them in our churches. We look at them and our hearts are strongly called out toward the archetypes of these dim resemblances that are in glory. We remember their toils and temptations along the same thorny path which we are traveling. We contemplate the visages of the holy pilgrims that have arrived at our home before us, and we bedew these images with the tears of memory and tenderness. This is our worship of images. You call us persecutors, and you have persecuted as often as you have had the power. Ask your Quakers. Search the records of those times, when superannuated and broken down old women were burned as witches. Look at the church record of Geneva, and, in fact, of every place where you have had the power. We grant you, it is right that the great Master of the granary should sit in it with his

fan in his hand, and that the chaff should burn with unquenchable fire. The true Catholic Church never did, and never could persecute. Whatever she has done, has been only to apply an energetic medicine to a desperate case, to purge away the leaven of heresy, and avail herself of that temporal sword which has been given her to vindicate her own glory and advantage."

I cannot, and it would be useless to follow him in his long and labored harangue. In the same spirit he discussed and apologized for the decrees of the councils, the Protestant charges of corruption and tyranny in the papacy, and in the religious houses, the sale of indulgences, the doctrine of purgatory, of the Real Presence, and the other peculiar dogmas of the Romish church. Sometimes his arguments were ingenious, and his apologies and defences plausible. Sometimes he availed himself of the most palpable sophisms; as, for instance, he was an asserter of infallibility in the church universal, and not alone in the Pope, the head of the church. "I do not say," said he, "that any individual, or any portion of this church is infallible. Every constituted member of the church is fallible. But the whole taken together, is infallible, and so of the rest." He insisted most earnestly on the patronage which the Catholic Church had always afforded to genius, talent, investigation and discovery, and adverted to the great inventions as having been universally of Catholic origin. He spoke of the unequalled advancement of the fine arts under the fostering care of Leo X. He summed up all his rhetoric and called in aid all his insinuations, in syllogizing one grand ultimate maxim. "You cannot but admit, and your church does admit, that we may be right. You know our grand maxim, *Point de salut hors de l'église*. (There can be no salvation out of the church.) You admit that there may be salvation in ours. Upon



your admitted principles, we are safe, and you are not. My dear son, who has yielded temporal salvation to me? Oh! allow me to be instrumental in the salvation of your soul. The Condesa and her daughter pray for you, and wrestle with the saints and the mother of God for your conversion. No words could describe the joy which I should carry them, could I inform them that a wanderer so dear to them was reclaimed and brought home to the fold. There is nothing which you might not hope for, from them or me, and that of the country. You should stay with us and I should fold you to my bosom as a son." I clearly saw how well he understood the weak points of human nature, and the seductions which would be most likely to seize upon any unfortified part of the heart. In addition to his own entreaties, he availed himself, at the close, of all the tricks of tears and exclamations. On the whole, I inferred that he had "two strings to his bow." If I were dismissed he seemed to feel that he should make enemies of the Condesa and her daughter, and rivet the friendship of the Conde and Don De Oli, and that the case would be reversed by my conversion. The glory of adding an obstinate heretic to the church appeared to weigh down the scale in favor of my conversion.

It was but right to be grateful for such disinterested concern for my soul, and I said as much to the father. "But," said I, "though I may not be able to follow you with so much address as you have done, yet you will allow me to suggest the thoughts which occurred to me upon some of your positions. I shall take them up in scriptural order, the last shall be first, and the first last. My understanding and my heart equally revolts against that bigoted maxim, *Point de salut hors de l'église*. If I could believe such a maxim for a moment, I should doubt at once the wisdom, benevolence and the mercy of the Universal

Father. Neither has your church alone the use of that miserable sophism which you build on that maxim. Among those sects in our church to which you have adverted with so little courtesy, I believe nearly the half of them have followed your church in shutting the gates of heaven against all but the staunch and devoted of that sect. What a humiliating spectacle, to see a few beings, so frail, so blind, so erring, as man, sitting down to scan the purpose of the Eternal in a council, laying down a few points of belief reduced to writing, and arrogating to themselves to say that every one who does not believe what we have here written will be damned. A thousand pagan sects are found to hold the same maxim. Alas! it is but too deeply laid in the heart of man, and each one of these pagan sects could urge the same conclusions upon you and me, with the same force as your church. Your syllogism would avail your church, if yours was the only one that could make use of it. Your church has patronized science, arts, discoveries? Witness Galileo, compelled by the united voice of the church declared by its infallible organ and head, the Pope, to renounce on his knees the true system of philosophy of the universe, the glimpses of which had dawned upon his mind. Witness the proscribed books, now interdicted in that region where we are among which are the works of Locke and Newton, not to mention numberless others, the most venerable names that science records. The age of Leo the Tenth I grant you was the age of painting and architecture. But the march of events, the progress of the human mind and the accumulated tax, which bigotry had extorted from ages and nations, collected at Rome and squandered in a period which your own writers admit to have been the most abandoned that your church had ever seen, would have produced the paintings

of Raphael, and the church of St. Peter, if the religion had been that of pagan Rome.

“As to the persecuting spirit of your church, I dare not trust my feelings for a moment to discuss it. If our church has imitated yours in its worst features in the smallest degree, so much the less honor for it. But, sir, our persecutions, to yours, is but a drop to the ocean. Alas, sir, I have read a description of an *auto da fé* by a member of your own church. Do I not know, that to the most revolting hypocrisy, adding the last refinement of cruelty, when you deliver over the wretched victim to the secular power, to be roasted alive! you charge that power not to hurt him, even so much as a hair of his head. You cannot suppose that I have not read the history of the wretched Albigenses and Waldenses, inhabiting the mountains and valleys of the Cevennes. Who of us have not heard of the manner in which you have treated the Huguenots? Who of us have not read the massacre of St. Bartholomew? Our very children learn their rudiments from a book which represents in coarse but striking representation the burning of the venerable Rogers, his wife and nine children looking on the dismal spectacle. I am willing to believe, what I hear the liberal and enlightened laity of your church affirm, that with the advancing, improved and more merciful spirit of the age, your church has remitted some of its sternness and dogmatism. But an exclusive and arrogant spirit seems to have been so deeply interwoven with the texture of your church that you cannot lay it aside. You transmit it from country to country, and from age to age. I have no dread of any church that is not in power. But I would not wish to see the renewed experiment of the universal power and influence of the Catholic Church as it was in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, lest I should see the



spirit of that age return unbroken and entire. I should dread its ascendancy in any country. In its present form, I consider it a form of worship only adapted to the meridian of an absolute despotism. We see it only displaying the properties of an exotic, in my own country. For the rest, sir, trying your dogmas on other principles, the idea of God, existing in a morsel of pastry, offered in a thousand places at the same time,—a god created by a priest, offered up to himself, as a daily and universal sacrifice and expiation of sin,—is a dogma that I will not discuss, for I respect religion, and I have deep and fixed opinions upon the subject. Your church, you say, is an infallible whole, made up of fallible parts, and this is an axiom worthy of the church that proscribed Galileo for teaching the true doctrine of the universe. Your prayers to the saints, your purgatory, your bank of merit, and other points of that class, it is unnecessary to take into account. We may lay them aside with other unimportant points, upon which you have touched. I am ready to confess and regret, that other churches have been corrupt, as well as yours; but in none other can you find as many dark and scandalous records as in yours at the time when the sale of indulgences was authorized, and that change, which we call the Reformation, commenced. I close by questioning the truth of the position with which you began, the antiquity of the Catholic Church, as it is now constituted. Even were it correct, it would prove nothing or too much. Paganism is almost as old as creation. If mere precedence in error proves anything, your church, on this ground, would have to renounce its claims. But error and falsehood do not approximate toward truth as they grow old. The truth of yesterday's discovery is older than creation, for it existed forever. But that enormous structure of dogmas, rites, pretensions and assumptions, which was reared in the

days of popes and antipopes, when kings and emperors held the stirrup of the one infallible, that had succeeded in putting down the other, was, I believe, comparatively of very recent date. I have no objection to fine religious paintings in a church. One thing in your church has my unqualified praise. I admire the architecture of it, its dim religious light, its massive grandeur, as being better adapted to produce religious impressions than ours. Neither am I displeased with some of the imposing forms of your worship. My heart subscribes to most of your forms of prayer. Your church appeals, in my judgment, too much to the senses; ours too much to the intellect. A medium ought to be adopted on this point. Could your church renounce its arrogant pretensions, some of its absurd, impossible and contradictory dogmas, and yield something to the enlightened spirit of the age, there is much in it that I admire. Had I lived in the days of primitive Christianity, I should have belonged to the Catholic Church as it was then. But, as it is now, never. Gladly would I gain the good will of the Condesa and her daughter. But you could not induce me to prevaricate upon such an awful subject could you endow me with all the delights of Mahomet's fancied paradise. My motto is, 'I will hold fast to my integrity, and not let it go.' No man ever had his convictions changed by an *auto da fé*. It might operate to make a man confess with his lips what his heart detested. It might operate to concentrate hypocrisy and produce more seeming ardor in the new convert than in the old proselyte. God can destroy or mould the mind anew, but, reverently speaking, Omnipotence itself cannot make me believe against my impressions and contrary to my convictions. All avowals that have been extorted by torture, fear, avarice or ambition, could have been only miserable prevarications. In the simple, intellectual and

scriptural forms of my church I have entire confidence and respect. In the region where I was born, if any practical scale of measurement could be instituted, I have not a doubt that there is more regard to God, the sanctions of an invisible world, and the real and stern requirements of morality, in a single society there than I have seen here in this whole region. We have been mutually plain. I hope my frankness will be no more offensive to you than yours was to me. I have been bred to respect the truth more than anything else. You see, sir, what my convictions are, and whether I am not likely to live and die clinging to them, the thing which you call heresy."

The father was, as I have said a courtier, accustomed to control the expressions of his feelings. But on this occasion he could neither control his countenance nor his words. It was obvious that my frank reply had stirred deeply his inward depravity. His face was strongly marked with anger and vindictive feelings. "Satan, avoid!" muttered he. "I must relate to the Condesa and her daughter that this is a most hopeless case. Thou art in the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity. Words on such as thee are thrown away." In this temper he left me. As generally happens in these profitable debates, each party, in reporting the result, claims the victory, and sings a *Te Deum* over his foiled antagonist.



## CHAPTER XII.

## DRIVEN AWAY.

IN the course of the day I received a kind and considerate letter from the father of the Misses Vonpelt, whom I had repeatedly met at the Conde's. He had impressed me from the first as an amiable, affectionate and kind-hearted German. I had understood that he was universally beloved in Durango. From his letter I inferred that he, too, suffered from the suspicion of being a republican, and he declared himself ready to act and suffer for the rights of man. It breathed a strain of kindness toward me, and something like indignation for the treatment which he understood I had recently received at the hands of the Conde. He offered me, for the present, an asylum in his noble house in Durango, and a most cordial invitation to come and stay with him, and continue the tuition of his daughters. The letter enclosed, besides a handsome gratuity, the amount of my bill up to that time.

Soon after receiving this letter I had a visit from the father of my pupil, Dorothea, whom I had never seen before. He was called Don José Maceo, and appeared to be a plain, bluff, soldier-like man, to whom great wealth, and the custom of habitual deference, had given the habit of thinking, speaking and acting without the least reserve or restraint. He paid my bill, and made his own commen-

taries upon the manner in which I had been reported to have been treated in the Conde's family. He took care to inform me that he, too, was rich, noble, a Gauchupine, and accustomed to consult nobody's judgment but his own. An acquaintance of his from a neighboring town had recently converted all his estate into cash and loaded a number of mules with bullion and escaped to the United States. He was anxious to act in the same way, and avoid the chances and dangers of a revolution, which he anticipated.

With very little circumlocution he let me into the flattering secret that his daughter had taken a particular fancy to me, so strong, in fact, that she was willing to surrender to me, on the simple condition of becoming her husband, her fair person and the reversion of her immense fortune. "In short," said he, "that matter once settled, there would be no dispute about property. This daughter is my all; and whatever is mine, not only in time will be hers, but I should have nothing separate from my son-in-law even now." I discovered that he had been many years stationary, and had become indolent and timid, and in wishing to fly to the United States with his wealth, he wanted some person in whom he could have confidence, to go before him in the expedition. He had fixed his eye upon me as a suitable person in this point of view, and to this motive, together with his habitual custom of being swayed by the wishes of his daughter, I owed the very extraordinary and flattering proposition which he now made me.

He took care to inform me that this was not a solitary case; that a Mr. Vance, a fine-looking young man from the States, had recently passed through the country, and that, during a temporary residence in Durango, he had engaged the affections of a wealthy young Spanish lady,

who took care to have him duly apprised of the premises; that he had accepted the offer, had married the young lady, and was now living happily in an adjoining province. His daughter, he remarked, was much wealthier than the young lady in question, and had property enough for us both. Whimsical and singular as were his views of things in other respects, it was clear that he had no small degree of cleverness in dressing up his proposition in a manner to render it tempting to a person much more eligibly settled than I was. Had I been a mere speculator and adventurer, whose only object was to establish myself in the world, imagination could hardly have pictured a more tempting offer. No restrictions were coupled with the proposal, such as had been in the parallel example, which had been quoted, in which the young man was obliged to turn Catholic, and remain in the country. The very proposition to me was, to carry my bride and all her wealth to any part of the United States upon which I should fix. Apart from the vast fortune of Dorothea, she was far from being unattractive, either in person or manners. She could dance the fandango, and play the guitar with the best of them; and under particular circumstances of feeling, complexion and dress she was at times even beautiful. Besides, her undisguised partiality, which she had taken no pains to conceal almost from the first of our acquaintance, was very flattering to the feelings of a young man. She was rather haughty, it is true, but promised to be a person whom kindness would easily mould to my wishes. The vision flashed across my mind, of returning with my bride, bedecked with laces and jewels, to my native village. I well knew that my father's family and myself had our enviers here. What a delightful thing it would be to confound them with all our undisputed wealth and grandeur! But, besides that I had always had



a fixed detestation of marriages merely mercenary. I was abundantly shielded from temptation by other feelings, of sufficient energy to exclude the slightest inclination toward these proposals. But there was a very unpleasant difficulty in the way of making my feelings known to my visitor. He seemed to have taken it for granted, when he made me the offer, that it was one so entirely flattering, and of advantage so unmingled, that there was no place for hesitation. I blundered through the best apologies which I could possibly invent, while I declined his very flattering and tempting proposals. I had the satisfaction to see, that though very much surprised, he did not seem offended. It occurred to him, he said, that different people saw things in different lights, and that his daughter was of a character intrinsically too frank and noble to have degraded herself by offers of the kind, although they had been refused.

To M. de Vonpelt I returned thanks for his politeness, and as I had always had no small degree of fraternal regard toward his amiable daughters, and had considered him a man of feeling, intellect, and character, very different from the rest, I informed him, that, for the time during which I should sojourn in Durango, I would trespass on his hospitality.

Early in the morning of the day before that in which I was to leave the family of the Conde, the duenna brought me a written card from the Condesa requesting me, at any hour in the afternoon that I should name, to meet her and her daughter in her chamber, to which the duenna would conduct me. I sat down to write a reply. 'She placed her plump and laughing figure before me in the chair, and filled every moment with incessant chatter about me and her dear young mistress, harping continually upon the strain, how confidently she had hoped that the father con-

fessor would have converted me; that if I could only have gotten from the Holy Virgin a heart a little more tractable, I might have remained in spite of all, and married her dear young mistress; and that she, for her part, as she told her mistress, longed to see what beautiful children would be where husband and wife were both so beautiful. She let me know, in her way, that she thought that people ought to have complexions rather dark, in order to be good Catholics, for that the Misses Vonpelt, who were fair, like me, were none too firm in the faith, and that she was afraid her mistress was rather too fair to be a good Christian; that had she been a young man, like me, she would have changed her religion three times a day to gratify the wishes of so sweet a girl as her mistress. "Now," said she, "you love her, I will swear it by our Lady of the Pillar. I know it by the very turn of your eye. I have told my young lady as much. And now, in a mere freak of wilfulness, because you will not have the advantage of a mass for your soul, you are going to part from each other, both to be broken-hearted."

I had never expected to meet Isabel again, and had fortified my mind to this belief. I had said of the parting, with the royal sufferer, "Surely the bitterness of death is past." But the thought of parting from her, whose image was engraven on my heart, and was so intimately associated with all my day and night dreams, was so painful that I embraced the prospect of one more interview with her, as a condemned convict receives a reprieve at the place of execution. And yet it would be only to go over all the bitterness of looking for the last time again on a countenance so dear. As I had fairly passed through this thing once, I sometimes thought it would be best to inform her that it would be unadvisable for us to meet again. But I returned an affirmative answer to the request of the Condesa. I

had been flattered with possessing the philosophy of patience. I now saw how unjustly that poor virtue had been ascribed to me. My pulse bounded with fever heat and rapidity, and I looked at my watch every ten minutes. When at last the duenna arrived to conduct me to them, I was obliged to moderate my joy, by saying that it was probably for one poor half-hour, and all would be past again, and I should be just as desolate as before.

Both the mother and daughter were pale when I entered, and the solemnity of a funeral was in their countenances. "After all you have done for us," said the Condesa, "I felt willing to indulge my daughter in this parting interview, though I fear it had been better for both, had it not taken place at all. It would be alike useless, and contrary to my feelings, to attempt to disguise from you, who understand it all very well, the state of things here. I still cherished some latent hopes that the father might give us some encouragement that you might one day conform to our church. That hope is not only past, but the father pronounces you inveterate and incorrigible in your opinions, and so bitter in your feelings in regard to our worship as to be altogether dangerous to be allowed intercourse with the faithful. It is true, the force of truth extorts from him the admission that he believes you would not violate your given word, or attempt to make proselytes, after you had pledged yourself not to do so. I regret that you could not manage the father a little; and yet that stern independence, that fearless regard for your principles, even though wrong, is a trait that we all know how to appreciate. It seems fated that you must leave us, and, it is probable, forever. I feel, and the Conde feels, that we are on the summit of a volcano. He well knows that we are surrounded by enemies on every side. How much we need some one like you, to be always with us! I am happy to



see in the decided manner in which you act on all those points where a little forbearance or concealment might have changed the face of things here, that the pain and regret of parting is all on our side. Had it been otherwise, you certainly might have indulged yourself innocently in courses which would have silenced your enemies, and admitted of your staying." I answered her "that I had least of all expected from her, intimations that it was possible for an upright man to conceal or keep back anything in a position like mine. The temptations to do this, powerful as they were, I had overcome. I am not conscious that I did not treat the father confessor respectfully. I had the same right to be plain with him in regard to his faith, as he had with me in regard to mine. I was willing to exercise mutual forbearance. I was reluctant to the interview. You must know that I am under no obligations to the father. The gracious manner which he saw fit to assume on that occasion was as little pleasing to me as his constant distance, I may say rudeness, has always been before. You can never know, madam, nor will honor allow me to reveal, what I am suffering in parting from some of the members of this family. But even to gain their favor, were it not like boasting, I would say to gain heaven itself, I would neither conceal nor prevaricate on the score of my religious principles." "Well, daughter," said the Condesa, "our time is spending; if you wish, as you said, to utter some final thanks and adieus, let us not prolong the pain of this parting."

"You are right, sir," returned Isabel, "right even in your firmness, or, as the father would call it, obstinacy. I earnestly wished, that your convictions might have yielded to the arguments of the father; and yet, such are the contradictions of the heart, had you done it, my estimation of you would have been lowered. Our principles

ought to be engraven on the heart. I respect a well-principled perseverance, even in the wrong. But are we sure, my mother, that the sentiments of this man are wrong? Who hath given to one party the power to make an unerring decision? If conduct be a test of principles, who devotes himself so readily? Who is it that neither considers nor spares himself in the moment of danger? The very point upon which he has been so much abused, refusing to fight Don De Oli, and which was so readily placed to other motives, was, I doubt not, a sacrifice of feeling to principle. Oh! If the other had something of the real courage of this man! But I forget, sir, that you are present. It was in kindness that you saved me from perishing in the water. Would that I had died, for my heart is insupportably heavy at the thought of this parting. I surely wish you all good things, and yet I am so selfish I could wish that you had some share with me in this pain of parting." As she said this, the tears, which had been repressed by strong effort, flowed freely, and the face of the mother was covered.

After a moment's pause, and apparently a successful effort at composure, she resumed: "This, then, is the last time I shall see you on the earth? But young as I am, I have seen that it is the course of everything below; disappointment, vexation, misery, the bitterness of parting; and it is only death that brings repose. Be it so. I will wait patiently for that grand cure. I had flattered myself that, somehow, things might be otherwise. But it is good for me early to pull down with my own hands my fairy palaces, and I submit. Go and be elsewhere, and to others, the same excellent young man that you have been to me. May no other luckless girl feel as I do at parting from you. My life will be consecrated to remembrance. Why should I wish you to retain a remembrance of me, as pain-

ful as mine of you? Go, forget me and be happy. But I can never forget you. I will remember you, to devote myself to others, as you have done for me."

"And is this the way," I asked, "to send me away happy? Is this the way, Doña Isabel, to fortify me for this parting? I would have been thankful had you sent me away with reproaches. I might have recalled reproaches or indifference in aid of efforts to forget, when away. I intended that nothing should have wrung from me confessions, which may be harmless, as things are now, but are utterly unavailing. Why should I reveal feelings, against which I have honorably struggled, but with so little effect? The agonizing sensations which I have so long experienced, and I expiate my offence by enduring, in all its bitterness, the malady which I have scoffed at as an unreal evil, the origin of *ennui*, or of pampered weakness. There is but one motive, for which I wish to live. You shall hear of me again. Your father has reminded me once and again, of my condition, and of my obscurity. You shall hear that I have gained glory, not, perhaps, in the way in which you would have chosen that I should gain it. But I will gain glory in the way of my principles, and your hearts in the end, shall be compelled to approve the course I take. My pole-star shall be your image. My talisman shall be the word *Isabel*. That word shall excite me to daring. That word shall give me patience for toil. Heaven avert the omen, that you shall be again in danger. But it may be that you shall hear from me again, and in the hour of your greatest need."

But I ought not to tire you with these details, which after-circumstances have consecrated in delightful remembrance, but which must always be tedious to parties less interested. The silky-milky adventures of this sort ultimately lead, as you will hear, to important results; and



however they may seem to you in the relation, were no joke to us at that time. However that may be, it grew to be a scene, before it was over. I saw plainly enough that the high-born and high-spirited young lady was completely subdued, and manifested her feelings without control. We parted a great many times, and had a great many adieus, and protestations and tears, and avowals of hatred of Don De Oli and declarations of unalienable love, and assurances that I should be taken at my word, that they should hear from me again. The mother dissolved the meeting by making an effort, and leading her daughter away.

It would be difficult for me to recall the remembrance, and still more difficult for me to describe the desolation of heart which I felt when I returned to my apartment. I looked at the books which we used to read together, and the door through which she used to enter, for her recitations; the apartment, the earth, and all the future assumed to me a funeral gloom. The gloom and distress of my countenance were transferred to the honest and affectionate Fergus, who begged that he might accompany me wherever I went. I placed before him all the comforts which he was leaving; shelter, security, bed, daily fare, and membership in a respectable family. I pointed out the uncertainty and precariousness of my own prospects. But nothing would dissuade him from his purpose. "Besides," said he, "have I not promised the jewel, her own sweet self, and sworn by St. Patrick and my mother that I will never leave ye? And do ye think she didn't ask me to repeat to him the name of Isabel sometimes. Maybe, yer honor, as I know the ways of the family, I can slip a bit of a letter backwards or forwards, as occasion may serve. But as to drive me away from yer honor, I have sworn an oath upon my soul against it."

It appeared that my departure made a great sensation in and about the house, for every servant came up to say *adios*, and to ask something by way of souvenir, as is the custom among them. Among the rest came the duenna, apparently staggering under the weight of a trunk. I assisted her to take it from her head, and when she had set it down, even her joyous face was sad. She crossed her arms over her breast, and exclaimed: "What a terrible affair this love makes! See, I have brought something from the young lady and her mother. I know not what it is, but they say they will consider it unkind in you not to accept it. Surely you will not hurt them by sending it back. My poor young mistress has done nothing but weep ever since she heard that you were to go. And when Don De Oli speaks to her, what a look she gives him! She has gone to her couch, weeping, poor thing. Some folks are over wilful; but I see, that if they insist upon her marrying Don De Oli, they will only kill her, after all."

I found the trunk to contain an assortment of the finest articles of a traveler's apparel, complete changes of dress of the richest texture and workmanship, neatly marked, and arranged for immediate use. At the bottom was a small cabinet, exquisitely wrought, and inlaid with pearl. From its prodigious weight I calculated its contents. It was filled with gold coins; a gold watch, brilliantly set with diamonds; and what I valued far more than all the rest, a letter which I knew from the firm and neat Italian hand to be from Doña Isabel. I give it in English, just as it was written, and perhaps no unfavorable sample of her progress in the language.

"TO SEÑOR ROBERT GORDON, ESQ.:

"SIR—This being the first letter which I have written to my instructor in English, you will not expect much

correctness. My heart is too heavy, to allow me to think of that. My mother and I have thought it not wrong to send you, as a traveler, dear to us both, and parting from us, the little matter contained in this box. They may be of use to you. To us, considering the danger of the times, and our condition, even if Providence had not given us abundance, they could be of none. Some part of each of the articles of dress was wrought with my mother's needle and mine. The cypher on the back of the watch is my mother's hair and mine united. She has always been your friend, and for her sake, if not mine, you will value it. When you look at the hours, assure yourself that, however swiftly and pleasantly yours may pass, mine will be anxious, heavy, and, as your poet says,

*“Slow as the stealing progress of the year.”*

“The rest was dug from those mountains near us, which you have so much and so often admired, and may remind you, when you are far away, that they will still lift their heads in unalterable grandeur, and repose above our mansion, and remind me of the thunder storm that came over their blue summits, in the progress of which storm, I admitted, for the first time, that I loved you. It would be all dross to me. But in the selfish and cruel world, through which you may have to make your way, they may be of use to you. You will not, surely, refuse these trifling matters from a simple and confiding young lady, whose life you have twice saved, and who would be glad of some little memorial in return. You need have no scruples, for my father not only approved, but suggested the offering. With all you have done for me, I remember but few words of distinguished kindness that you have said. I wish I could remember more. You will not be so cruelly proud, as to determine to have all the obligation on your side.



I know not, but you may remember me as forward or foolish in my affection. I have driven away that bitter apprehension, by saying it is the last opportunity I shall have to humble myself in that way. . . . ISABEL."

The only token of remembrance of which I was capable of returning was a number of copies of our best poets, which I had brought with me from the States.

"DOÑA ISABEL:

"I have none of that cruel pride, which would incline me to return what has been so kindly sent me. The articles derive a value from the feeling with which they were sent, superior even to their intrinsic utility and beauty. I am possessed of too little to make you any adequate return. You have loved our poets, and I have taught you to understand them. When you look into these volumes, besides opening to you their magnificent and delightful creations, they may remind you, that before I knew you, they were all my treasure, the only thing I cared for. Much as you are used to homage, and much as you merit it, even you can receive but all. You say, that I have said to you but few words of distinguished kindness. Surely you know, dear Isabel, that strong and deep emotions are apt to be silent. Those brilliant eyes look too deep into the heart, not to have seen what was at the bottom of mine. If I have not given utterance to my feelings it is because words were too poor to do it, or because timidity, or respect, or honor, or all of them united forbade the use of them. While on the contrary, all your expressions of gratitude for my poor service, all the considerate kindness of your generous nature, might be uttered to me without hazarding self-respect or dignity. They were always viewed by me as the condescensions of a mind

intrinsically as elevated as your rank and condition. What in me would have been arrogance, or violation of confidence, in you was but the expression of benevolence. I shall look on the watch, without needing the bright tresses in the back to remind me of the lovely head from which they were shorn. I am sure, too, that I shall be sufficiently aware of the heaviness of the hours, without watching the progress of the second hand. But it shall impress one useful lesson. I will ask, how would Isabel wish me to employ my time? Time, in this view, will become a consecrated thing. You will be beneficent in exalting my aims, and causing me to be so. The continual, tender, and mournful remembrance of you, will be to me as an invisible guardian spirit, ever present to render me such as I should be."

I sent the letter and package, made my little arrangements for the morrow's journey, threw myself on my couch, and would have gladly quieted the tumultuous tide of my feelings, and the feverish throbbings of my heart in repose, as deep as that of the honest Fergus, who snored at my side. But the pensive youth knew the character of the "sweet restorer," and how readily on her "downy pinions, she flies from woe," I made a painful effort to sleep. I applied all the remedies that I knew, but all to no purpose. I arose and wrote a few verses to Isabel and left them with the duenna for her mistress.

A cart had been ordered by the Conde, to carry my baggage to Durango. I had arranged with Fergus to have my horses saddled, and my valise ready before the stars should have disappeared from the morning sky. I had taken my adieu of the Conde the preceding night, and had hoped to be off in the morning, without being seen by any of the family. We were not as early as we had hoped to be, and as I descended under the shade of those noble

sycamores, where I had so often seen the light figure of Isabel in her morning promenades, the birds were already twittering on every branch. I looked up to the windows of my peaceful apartments, and sighed my adieu. We rode slowly and silently down the lawn, and the ruddy streaks of advancing morning were broadening toward the zenith. I was just beginning to congratulate myself, that we would likely clear the vicinity, without any of those last words and parting recognitions, that in such cases are to me inexpressibly painful. Another pang was still in reserve for me. Just on the margin of the stream at the ford, and precisely at the point where I had rescued them both from the water, I saw the Condesa leaning on her daughter's arm. I was obliged to pass them, and, of course, could not do it without a salutation. I gave my horse to Fergus, and went to meet them. Isabel was dressed with more richness than I had ever seen her before. A blaze of diamonds in her head-dress only served to render the contrast of unwonted paleness and anxiety spread over her countenance more striking. The general spirit of her eye had given place to languor, almost resembling disease. The usual salutations on both sides were heavy and embarrassing, and Isabel seemed to have slept the preceding night no more than I had. The Condesa regretted that any circumstance should have rendered it expedient that we should take such an early start. "But," she said, "Fergus told us that you expected to be off by the light of the stars. Isabel took a severe cold, when you rescued her from the water, and has been ill since that time. Having been restless through the past night, we thought the cool air of the morning might refresh her, and our morning walk naturally brought us to this place, so associated with the remembrance of you; and we are here to witness your final departure."



I replied that my eagerness to be off so early, could not be construed to arise from my wish to leave friends so dear, and that she must put it to the right motive, a desire to avoid the pain of another parting. "It is wrong, now," interrupted Isabel, "that two such good persons, who feel toward each other as you do, should occupy this sad moment, and in this place, too, with mere words of cold ceremony that mean nothing. I wish to detain you, sir, but one moment, with a simple question. Affirm or deny, and I will believe all you say, as though it came straight from Heaven. I blush to admit, that I listened to the idle prattle of servants. But it is circulated in our family, that in resentment to my father, or from other motives, you are going to reside in Durango, and are to marry either Dorothea or the elder Miss Vonpelt. I am weak, selfish, or whatever you please to call it, to such a degree, as to hope that it may not be so. Just say it is so, or not, and I will not detain you another moment?" "Certainly, I have no such thought," I answered. "I should have supposed that Doña Isabel would have done more justice to the efforts, which she must have seen me making to suppress my feelings, than to suppose me capable of such a rapid transition, as either of these suppositions must take for granted. I have thought of staying a few days in Durango, in the house, and at the invitation of M. de Vonpelt, in order, if possible, to obtain a little more tranquillity, and to arrange my plans for the future. The thought has not occurred to me of marrying either of the parties, even if their consent were first obtained."

"See, now," said she, "that slanderer, Don De Oli, affirmed that you were offered the hand and fortune of Dorothea, and that you had, as a mere fortune hunter, accepted it; that no young man from your country would

ever suffer such an opportunity to make a fortune, escape him. I thank you. You have moved a weight from my mind." As she said this, I noticed that her voice became faint, and that her lips and cheeks were as white as her muslin robe. She leaned on her mother's arm, and I involuntarily advanced toward her. She put her hand to her head, as if for reflection, and feebly added, "I had a word more to say to you, but, mother, I must sit." I saw that she was fainting, and I received her unconsciously in my arms. I instantly bore her to the stream, filled my hand with water, and poured it on her face. My first effort to restore her produced only spasms, and not restoration. The shrieks of the mother soon summoned a host of the Conde's people, and among them the Conde and Don De Oli, to the spot. The daughter had begun to recover, and was sitting on the sward while I was rubbing her temples.

The Conde approached me, and with a voice of furious sternness, bade me begone, while he ordered his servants to convey his daughter to the house. "This is too much, sir," said he, turning to me. "You are determined to make a scene of everything. My weak wife, and weaker daughter, may have consented to this interview, after you had taken a formal leave of us all. But you are watching your chances to kill my daughter, forsooth, because you have saved her life. You seem to wish that your triumph over her understanding may become conspicuous to every member of my establishment. Go, sir, and know, that by this deportment, you have relieved me from the load of obligation, and canceled the debt. We learn that you have an appointment with M. de Vonpelt. Know, sir, that he is proscribed as a traitor. A traitor he has been all along. For we learn that he has long since transferred his property to Great Britain, and thus he has avoided

confiscation. He escaped yesterday, to join the rebels in their den of treason on Mount Mextpal. If he should be overtaken, he dies an honorable but immediate death, by the spear. Certain considerations prevent your arrest, and had you left me without this last interview with my wife and daughter, I might have retained confidence in you. But it is too evident that you seek these opportunities. He who can be treacherous in one instance, can in another. I am now perfectly aware that I have been the dupe of your artifices too long."

"And I, too," cried Don De Oli, "have my grievances, and I would cancel all on the spot were it not more humane to allow you to fly. The Conde allows you twenty days, within which you must make your escape from the country. If you are afterward found in it, you will be considered as any other traitor and rebel, and be treated accordingly." "Go," added the Conde, catching the rage of the furious young man, "your associates from the Comanches have joined the rebels. A horde of assassins from your country are pouring in upon the frontiers. It is fitting that you should be among them. Treason is the sport of the people from the States. You ought to be among them. But warn them, sir, that they will have a reckoning with me and Colonel Arredondo. I will promulgate the law for rebels and traitors at the point of the spear. I will read them lectures upon their new-fangled patriotism in letters of blood."

I waited until he got through, in perfect coolness. The foolish transports of these two men, who seemed willing to avenge in me the crimes of the insurgents, restored me to perfect self-possession. Said I, "Gentlemen, it is the business of soldiers to fight, and not to fret, scold, and call names, like old women. I feel somewhat superior to you both. I explained to you one meeting with Doña Isabel, when I fished you out of the water. I saw her



yesterday, in consequence of a special invitation from the Condesa. I have the card yet. Here it is, sir. Madam will inform you, that I started very early this morning, in order to preclude, if possible, any chance of meeting any member of your family. The meeting was accidental, unexpected, undesired. Your daughter fainted. I aided her, and should do it again in the same case. I have thought of the cause of the patriots before. The only impression that hindered me from studying their motives, and if I found them pure, from joining them, has been, that I was unwilling to be in arms against the government of Doña Isabel's father. Your outrages have severed that tie. I am a patriot from principle. If there be such a rising as you describe, and headed by honest men, I will join it. Should I ever meet with you in hostile array, my hand would only be raised to defend you. But for you, Don De Oli, nothing would please me more, than to meet you face to face in the high places of the field, where no compunctious visitings would hold back my arm. I hope we shall meet again. *Adios*, to you both." I mounted and Fergus moved to do the same.

"Stop, there," cried the Conde. "Go back, sir. You belong to me. There is no reason why I should send another traitor to the rebels. Dismount and go back to the house. And you, sir," added he, turning to me, "would be arrested, and in the mines, without a passport. Here is one, made out in full form. It will last you for twenty days, and no more. Within that time you can join the rebels at Mount Mextpal, or leave the country, as you please. There is your other horse, sir, the time is precious and I wish you a good day."

## CHAPTER XIII.

## A REBEL COLONEL.

I HAVE thus far been the hero of my own story. However insipid my adventures may have been to you, they are material to preserve the thread of my story. My fortune from now on will be linked with the cause of the patriots in their efforts to free New Spain. You will find them to end in a successful revolution which wrested this great and fair portion of the American hemisphere from a miserable and blighting despotism, exercised over it by one of the most bigoted, ignorant and unprincipled tyrants that ever swayed the Spanish sceptre. Before I take that brief retrospect, which the order of events will compel me to take, that I may give some idea of the rise and termination of this great revolution, so far as I am connected with it, I shall first give you an outline of my course up to the time when I joined the patriots.

As I went on to Durango, it may naturally be supposed that my reflections were not of the pleasantest kind. I had been deemed of a mild temper. I had proposed to myself the highest model of forbearance and forgiveness. No curses, "neither loud nor deep," came to my lips. But I amused myself by thinking what a drubbing I would give Don De Oli, in the cause that I was determined to espouse. I then thought of

the condition in which I had last seen Doña Isabel. I meditated the depth and bitterness of love without hope. I saw the necessity of a resolution, and I made it. "I will show them that I am a man. I will not sink, a whining lover, into the depths of despondency. Had Isabel thus deemed of me that this was all my nerve, she would never have bestowed on me a second thought. I love, and at this moment see not a ray of hope. What then? Shall the future be obscured in impenetrable darkness and gloom? There is duty. There is a glorious career. What have such wretches as Don De Oli to do with the iron scourge, shaken over this oppressed and beautiful country? I have seen that despotism is most detestable.

A noble country, and a people naturally amiable to the highest degree, are regarded with sovereign contempt by the ignorant nobles who govern them and are trampled into the dust. Added to this, there is the still more wretched despotism of the priests, whose object is to fetter the mind, as others do the body; and who regard every ray of light let in upon the minds of the people as so much subtracted from their kingdom of darkness. My principles and my feelings both called me to this cause. I will gain glory. I will triumph over envy. I will humble that arrogant intended son-in-law. Who knows but that the patriots may triumph, and I may not again be of service to Isabel and her mother? But how will Isabel, who feels the ties of kindred so strong, regard me in arms against her father; in arms against a despotism and hierarchy, both of which all her associates and habits have taught her to consider as sacred? Such were the points on which I soliloquized as I rode along. I settled the point with myself by determining to do my duty. If the patriots pursue wrong ends, or use bad means, I will renounce the cause. If Isabel hears and approves, it is well.



But if she should not eventually subscribe to the right, I have loved an illusion. Did she not generously defend me in my adherence to my faith? And will she think the less of me for consistency here? My thoughts ended as they began, by mingled bitterness toward the Conde and Don De Oli with my purpose. I thought over their obligations and contempt with which they had answered them.

I found everything in Durango in an uproar. The public ear was filled with rumors. In the corner of the streets, and in all places of public resort, were seen groups of ragged, mean-looking men, with lowering brows, and with jealousy and apprehension in their faces, conversing together. Patrols of armed men were seen in the streets. I quickly found the value of my passport. I was obliged to produce my papers at every turn. I found it necessary to use caution in my inquiries for M. de Vonpelt. By good fortune I chanced upon the acquaintance of a surgeon from the United States, who had been settled for some years in the city. I found him, as might be expected, a republican in principles; but, having married a Spanish lady, and having gained considerable property, of which he could not now dispose, he was compelled to remain in the city on his guard, and watch the course of events. With him I could converse without suspicion. I found him honest, hospitable and intelligent. From him I learned that M. de Vonpelt had indeed been proscribed, and had fled with his family to the patriot gathering at Mount Mextpal. He gave me the most accurate directions to that place. The encampment was on the side of the mountain, which was about seventy miles from Durango, in the direction of San Antonio. He informed me that at the latter place there was another patriot encampment, in which a number of adventurers from the United States were enlisted under the standard of the Creoles, and engaged in actual hostil-

ities with the royal government. I gained from him much important local information respecting the strength of the two parties. Through him I made all the necessary preparations for my journey. I sold him one of my horses, and purchased a mule to carry my baggage, which the Conde had sent to the principal hotel in the city. I made the most prudent arrangements which the case admitted for securing against accident my precious trunk, furnished myself with the proper arms for my intended warfare, and a sufficient supply of wine and provisions. I packed my mule to the extent of his traveling powers, and disposed of the remainder in an immense valise for my own horse. I spent one night with my host, who showed himself in all respects a true American, and early the next morning, with mutual expressions of good will, I set my face toward the mountains and the camp of the patriots.

My journey led me, as usual in this country, on a great beaten road over red hills succeeded by grassy plains. I saw little to interest me. The impression of terror and apprehension was marked even upon the people passing on the roads. From the prevalence of mutual suspicions, the people traveled in large companies, and completely armed; so that every group had the appearance of a band of guerillas. The greater portion of them could not read, and for those who could, my passport was an unanswerable document. I met with no adventure, until a little after noon. My agitation and anxiety for the last three days had prevented me thinking much about food, but nature will have her way. I began to be faint, and to think of the provisions with which the benevolent surgeon had furnished me. A clump of shrubs and trees indicated a spring at a little distance from the road. Thither I was turning my steps to take my dinner in the shade, when I saw a solitary horseman descending the hill just behind me. As he

neared me I began to fancy that I had seen him before, in fact it proved to be no other than Fergus. Place any one in my situation, and you may fancy something of my joy at meeting him again. He sprang from his horse, and embraced me, shedding tears of joy. "Now," said he, "Satan roast them all if they ever separate me from yer honor again. Fergus has nicked them all, and cleared himself, though they barred him up like a runaway dog. Don't ye see, too, I have bought yer honor's horse. Who should I light on in Durango but the Yankee surgeon? I plumped upon him as though he had fallen in my porridge, and he told me all, and showed me the horse that ye had sold. When I had once set my eyes on him, no other beast would serve my turn. So, yer honor, out of the cash that Isabel, the jewel, has furnished me, I bought him back and mounted him and here I am safe and sound, to follow yer honor to the end of the world, to fight royalist, devil or dobbie, just as yer honor chooses."

"You have not told me how you escaped."

"Well, I will tell ye that too. After ye were off, the Conde ordered me to the palace before him. But Fergus is much of a mule when the gait does not please him. So I asks him, as his own self had bade me be yer servant, why he stops me now? So he looks big, this way, curses me, and shuts me up in that infernal calaboozo, with steel bars, that they have near the palace, and tells me to cool my fingers and learn patience there. There I sits me down on the straw to a comfortable little turn of thinking, and the fleas, yer honor, boring my tender skin in a thousand places at once. All the while I was as surly and as cross as a bull. At night they put in some bread, a cup of the element and a shank bone of tough beef in a platter, and I, yer honor, in pure ill nature, kicked it all over like a gentleman. The night and day in that horrid hole is all one thing. I guess



it was not far from midnight, when down comes the plump old duenna. Ay, does yer honor remember the capers we cut together when we first came home, and yer honor grinned this way? I sees her waddling up to the grates with her dark lantern, and she says, 'Fergus, O Fergus, are ye here, honey?' 'Ay,' says I, 'and no thanks to them that put me here neither. What would ye with Fergus?' She says, 'Fergus, ye are as cross as a rattlesnake, and ye always liked Anna, the quarteroon better than me. But ye are a pretty boy, Fergus, and I bears no malice. So, ye see, mistress and Isabel waited till the Conde had cooled down a little, and then they gave me the keys, and bid me unbung this jug of yours, and bid ye clear yerself and join Mr. Gordon as fast as ye can.' Be sure, yer honor, I needed no spur for that gait; and the while I was yawning and getting a little out of the kinks, she tells me all in a whisper, 'Fergus, ye can't guess what a fuss they have had. They have done all but raise the real devil himself. The Conde has quarreled with the madam, his wife, which is more than I ever knew him to do before, and he swore by all the saints, that he had almost a mind to bring the father confessor and marry his daughter to Don De Oli on the spot, and Isabel looked grand this way, and a little wild, and said a big speech, as how she would mind her father in all right things, 'But devil burn Don De Oli if ever he lays the finger of husband on me.'"

"I suspect, Fergus," said I, "that this last part of the speech is an interpolation of your own."

"No, please yer honor, it is neither pole nor hoop of mine in the least, but just the meaning of what the duenna told about Isabel. Oh! I couldn't tell yer honor all about it in an hour. The Conde is fretted to death, the new business on the mountain,

and another rising away there in the countries near yer honor's country. But he swears that it is harder to manage a wife, and a giddy girl, than a whole government of rebels, that he will see the girl safely married before he goes to fight the publicans. The Don, all the while puts the Conde up to this, and stands by, like a dog waiting for a bone, and, devil roast him, he looks big, this way, and is going to put on his regimentals, and swears how he will spite the publicans, and whip yer honor, and the likes of that. But the best is to come. Here's a sweetmeat for yer honor," and he took a billet from his bosom. It was from Doña Isabel and contained these words:

"I cannot but believe that you will be glad to hear that I am better. It was but a bad cold. Fergus will tell you what I suffer on account of our common enemy, Don De Oli. They have used some indignities toward me, and I am glad of it. My heart has been so heavy of late, that I feared my spirits would be broken down. But they will find to their cost that they have roused the blood of my ancestors, and that they cannot bring me to their purposes that way. I have no authority to counsel you, and yet my heart is still prompting me to say something. Whatever course you take, I am sure you think it the path of honor. You will not take it amiss, if I say one word to you about the mountain. You will go there, I am told. I wish you may not take arms against my father. But I foresee that you will be much with the Misses Vonpelt. They are good, and pretty; much fairer, I confess, than the Spanish ladies. I am far enough from being happy myself, but surely I am not so base as not to wish you happy, and you will be, for you will walk together and look at the mountains, and watch the setting sun, and the rising moon,

and have none to disturb you. Well, they may as well be happy as anybody. I hope you will not wholly forget me, when you teach them English. They will learn fast, I dare say, now that you have no other pupils. Could you not find time to write me now and then? It would teach me to correspond in English; and I think your verses are pretty, though on so poor a subject. Fergus has promised that he will find some way in which to forward your letters. Maybe I shall trouble you now and then with a line. It will be a hard thing for me to imagine you in the ranks against my father, and I know well, if you were to meet as enemies, that you would spare him for my sake. But the other, he has used us both with the basest indignities, and uses names in reference to you, in my presence, that I will not trace with my pen. I nightly and fervently implore the Mother of God, and all the saints, to guide you and keep you from all harm. If I could believe that there were more energetic forms of prayer in your church, I would use them too."

Nothing could exceed the delight of the honest Irish lad to rejoin me, and I felt as if, in this humble friend, I had found a brother. The spring was limpid and cool, the shade of the catalpas delightful. We ate heartily and drank a reasonable quantity of the heart-cheering *parso* with entire gusto. "And now," said Fergus, "yer honor, I feel like a lion. I am ready to march to the ends of the earth, and as much farther as yer honor pleases, and if the publicans don't find me up to the hard knocks, let them say, 'Fergus is a coward.'" We were soon jogging along the dusty highway toward the mountain. Our horses, when brought together, almost manifested the joyful recognition of Dapple and Rosinante.



We arrived, as the twilight was fading, at the foot of a mountain, the first of a chain which stretched, hill beyond hill, to the Gulf of Mexico. Its summit was still bright and illumined with the last rays of the sun, while the sides and its base were enveloped in the dusk of evening. We had overtaken, in the last half-hour, a number of solitary horsemen who were hastening to the same point of union. At an elevation of some hundred feet on the side of the mountain, on a table plain of no great extent, we saw the white tents of the patriots. A pass, barely wide enough for a horse to ascend, wound up the side of the mountain, among huge rocks. We were hailed with the question, *Adonde va?* by a couple of tall fierce-looking Spaniards, armed with all sorts of weapons. Those whom we had joined produced documents which procured them immediate admittance. I was aware that my passport from the Conde would be of no use here. I inquired if M. de Vonpelt were there. I was answered in the affirmative, and that any friend of his would be admitted. We were, however, most carefully scrutinized. Having advanced a few rods farther up the side of the mountain, to a small plain, we were joined by a file of soldiers. We next came to a pass barred up with fallen trees, except a narrow gateway, through which but one man could pass at a time. Here were temporary stables, and here we were compelled to leave our horses. A couple of porters came, who, with Fergus, carried our baggage. The story, which Fergus told with great fluency, of our having been driven away from the Conde's palace, as patriots, obtained for us undoubting confidence, and a cordial reception, and we were hailed as masonic brothers of the cause. We continued, with increasing difficulty, to climb up the rocks, and to wind round the side of the mountain, with a half-hour's laborious ascent. Then we opened upon a plain of some

acres in extent. In the centre was a smooth, level and verdant little prairie, on one side skirted by lofty trees, whose shadowy verdure showed delightfully by the hundred fires of the camp. The watchword was given by the leader of the file, and repeated from sentinel to sentinel, until the sound died away in the distance. We were immediately ushered into the camp, and brought to the tent of the commander-in-chief. Here our documents were examined anew, and as mine was the most suspicious case, M. de Vonpelt was sent for, to answer to my being a true man and not a spy. While I was awaiting the issue of this message, I had time to look round the camp. From the little I had seen and read upon the subject I judged that the tents were arranged in military order, and the tall, whiskered and fierce-looking men, seen partly in light and partly in the shade, made a formidable appearance. There was no uniform. Most of them were arrayed in a costume of motley, shaggy character, and the whole had more the aspect of banditti than the array of a regular military force.

In a few minutes the soldier came back accompanied by M. de Vonpelt. He had seen me two or three times at the palace, but he knew my estimation there, and especially for the confidence which his daughters reposed in me, he pronounced me a true man, as honest as a German. "I give mein Gott," said he, "a t'ousand t'anks that you are come. You shall stay mit me, und my tear girls vill be so happy. This man is one very goot American, und he has been treated very pad py de Conde; und he has come, as he says, to join the goot cause und fight for de liperties." I was welcomed by Morelos, the commander-in-chief, with great courtesy. After conversing with me a few minutes, and giving me some outline of the present state of things, he assigned a time in which we would deliberate together what

position and rank I should fill in the army, and I went with M. de Vonpelt. As we proceeded, he gave me some of the details of his proscription, which seemed to have been ill-advised and to have precipitated his purpose. I inferred from his account of the matter, that in the warmth of his frank and honest heart he had dropped some expressions, intimating good wishes to the patriots. They reached the ears of Colonel Arredondo and Don De Oli, and he was at once proscribed. "Put," said he, "I t'ank mein Gott, I have been in Old England, und learned to speag English almost so goot as a native, und I got the start of the tamned dons for I had sent all my moneys there as soon as I saw these tamned times coming. Und now, my poy, we vill pay them back in their own coin. Ve'll punish those vile hypocrites, the priests, too, und vill have the settling of the land. Not that I want their tamned mines, neider. I have moneys enough, I t'ank mein Gott. Put it's the liperties, my prave poy, it's the liperties ve want. There's never a true Tuchman on the globe but what loves de liperties, ay, petter than sour krout. Come on, my poy, ve'll at them together. How I shall make my girls' hearts leap mit dis sight of you. 'Tis a tamned tark hole under de side of the mountain where we stay. Put never mint. Ve'll peat them, und then have just such houses as ve like." He led the way and I followed him, through the tents, advancing toward a perpendicular mass of native limestone which raised its head a thousand feet into the air. Under this wall there was a capacious cavern, whose front opened with an elevation, just sufficient to admit us without stooping. Having entered, I found myself in a vast, vaulted aperture, scooped out by the hand of nature, of many hundred yards in extent, and the dome springing up to such a height as only to be faintly illumined by the candles and torches within. Huge natural columns and colos-



sal pillars of solid blue limestone, sprang up in different points to the roof. The whole had the appearance, thus dimly lighted, of a vast Gothic interior of a temple, of such a grandeur that no words can describe. It answered a great many purposes at once. It was immense, and sufficient to furnish shelter to an army. The air was at once cool and dry.

Here were the headquarters of the patriot officers. Here were lodged all the female part of their establishment. The lines of demarcation between the ladies and suits of different families were blankets or silken curtains or verdant branches or palmetto stalks. As far as the eye could penetrate in the rear of the cavern were natural apertures through the cliffs of the mountains, and here in blazing lines were the cooking fires of the camp. The range of nature could not have presented a place more favorable to everything that could be sought under such circumstances. There was perfect shelter from the elements, and impregnable security; and, as though nothing that the bounty of nature could furnish should be wanting, in one corner of this immense grotto trickled along a spring of pure, cool water, amply sufficient for all the exigencies of the whole camp. There were children, servants, negroes, Indians, domestics, and wives of all nations and colors. In one point leaned the stately Spanish dame, glittering with gems, and invested with the rich and splendid mantilla, and beside her glared the white eyes of a fat negro wench. In one compartment the patriot officer, with his immense hat and feathers, was snatching his repast from a table rudely made of planks. In another, was a family group, with children of all ages, taking their chocolate together. The clatter of plates chimed in with the roasting of beef and the hissing of boiling water in the rear. The united sound of voices through the

whole establishment, was not unlike that of a numerous flock of blackbirds at the north when perched on a tree. Some were singing patriotic songs, many of which were produced in the camp every day. Some were scraping the violin, others were thumming the guitar. But the whole medley of sounds was that in which reckless gaiety was the keynote. Between the parlors and the kitchen subdivisions there was an open promenade, from one end to the other, and along this walk were seen moving slowly, backward and forward, as if in deep meditation, the tall, dark and whiskered Solons and Solomons of the rising revolving the fate of empires in their bosoms, and, perhaps, regarding with complacency the gigantic shadows and the immense feathers and long swords which the tapers gave them on the huge rampart as they moved along.

Nothing could be more cheerful or affectionate than the welcome which the Misses Vonpelt gave me. They gaily told me, that, as any hope of making any deeper impression upon a heart so preoccupied, was out of the question, they would content themselves by calling me brother, and claiming only the attention and affection due to sisters. I found them the same round faces, bright complexions, and happy countenances that I had met at the palace. There was never a more striking contrast than that of these happy and beautiful faces, vying with the lily and the rose, these mantillas of the richest silks and crapes, clasped with diamonds and sparkling with gems, with the shapeless and awful grandeur of the cavern, under the superincumbent piles of snow top mountains, and the moving groups of ugly servants, fat wenches with their white eyes, and all the singular gradations of tinted skin, from the copper color of the native Indian to the jet black of the Congo African.

"Now, mein dear girls," said M. de Vonpelt, "I hope

you will scold mit me no more for bringing you to this tamned tark place. Here is your Yankee master, come to stay mit you, and to teach you the English, and fight the Dons mit me."

"Thank you, dear father," said the elder, "thank you," added the younger, and they cordially shook me by the hand, bidding me call them sisters, and that they would call me nothing but brother. "We told father," said the elder (her name was Jeannette), "that with the smoke, and the horrid ugly faces here, we were all losing our eyesight. Even the young fellows of Durango were not so superlatively ugly as these officers. Virgin Mary! I had no idea that all the patriots were such ugly fellows, or they never would have made a patriot of me." Katherine, the second Miss Vonpelt, was called by the family Katie, and the youngest, Henrietta, was commonly called Ettie. Katie eagerly questioned me, if it were a fact, that all the Yankees were handsome to a man; for, she whispered, it was confidently reported in the camp, that the Yankees at San Antonio were marching to join them here. "Oh! how sad and grave you look. I pity you, indeed, and so we do Isabel; but since it cannot be helped, we must try to cheer you." "Never mind," said Ettie, "the want of a heart does not show in the face. At any rate, we have a likely fellow to walk about with us and keep off the dogs. And what is more, we confide in our brother as honest, and this, among this bandit-looking people, is no small matter. When you want to read and sit still, you shall shake your head as you used to do at the palace, and we will all run to our books and be as quiet as kittens."

Everything with this amiable group wore the air of being *en famille*. Their father represented them to have been gloomy. My coming among them seemed to be the signal for the renewal of their innocent and uncontrolled gaiety.



Fergus, too, received from the father a proper welcome, and to the duties of a servant was to add those of a soldier. The omen attending my introduction among the patriots thus far seemed auspicious. In a little while we were seated at a smoking sirloin, sweet potatoes, *tortillas*, or Spanish corn cakes, coffee, chocolate, bananas, melons and fruits of all sorts, the plunder of the fields in the valleys below. There was no want of *parso* for me, and the squeezing of the native, as Fergus called it, that is to say, *aqua ardiente*, for him. For the rest, they made liberal use of an intoxicating drink called *vino mescal*. With these appliances of natural and artificial gaiety there was no want of merriment among us.

After supper the father remarked to his daughters that they must cease their chatter for a while and give us time to discuss the graver matters in hand. He drew me apart and communicated the present state of things, the plans and prospects of the leaders of the insurrection, and the omens of ultimate success. He was rather a cabinet agent than a general. Nevertheless he declared that, whenever an opportunity offered, he intended to fight. "They shall hear of their tamned proscriptions of me," said he. "They shall repent driving me und my sweet girls into this tamned hole." There was one point of his information in which I felt a lively interest. There was an actual rising in Texas, and many young men of respectability and standing from the United States were united with them in the ranks. This position was admirably chosen for defence, and for levying contributions on the adjacent country. It was also nearly midway between the City of Mexico and San Antonio, where the other rising was. Many of the patriots advised to remain here and erect impregnable fortifications, institute a press for a gazette, and open a point of union for all the *provincial internas*,

who were disaffected with the royal cause. Others advised to descend from the mountains and force their way to San Antonio and form a junction with the forces there, making much calculation on aid from the United States. A single glance at things was sufficient to show me the disadvantages under which the cause labored here. Very few of the leaders had any system or matured plan. Very few of them were acquainted with history or politics, and the leaders were generally much better instructed to noose a wild horse than to manage such ignorant, timid and yet ferocious people as made up the mass of the party. Their plans were shortsighted, having respect rather to momentary advantages than to distant, matured and ultimate success. Even the question whether to remain and strengthen themselves here, and wait for accessions to the cause, or sally from the mountains and march to San Antonio, became the watchword of a party. The question proposed to me, as soon as I was domesticated among them, was, are you for staying or going? My associates would assort with me, according to my answer. And as happens in such cases, the more trifling the difference between us, the more bitter was the discussion. What the advocates wanted in wisdom and capacity to deliberate, they made up in long-winged speeches, in zeal and fierceness.

I could see, too, that the motives that brought them here were as various as the appearance of the individuals. The very same cause which thickened adherents round the standard of King David, had its influence here. There were people in debt, spendthrifts, outlaws, people who came here through envy, and wishing for plunder and revenge, people who had nothing to lose, and who might find booty during the general conflagration. Every sordid, every base principle, every malignant passion had its recruiting efficacy, and had brought over more than one

partisan to the patriot standard. Among the servants, who wanted to be rid of masters, among the bankrupts, who wanted in this way to liquidate their debts, among the profligate, who wished to plunder the rich, among the ignoble, whose envy induced them to wish to set their foot on the neck of the great men of the country, among the many, who had congregated here from base and sinister motives, there was no doubt not a few of those pure and noble minds, that appear from time to time in small numbers on our orb, who calmly look down the current of the future, and with singleness of heart, and that sublime benevolence which contemplates no selfish ends, arrange their plans, with a kind of abstract and angelic calculus, for the good of the generations to come. No doubt but that we had our miniature Washingtons and Bolivars. There were a few fine young men, whose eyes kindled, as they dilated upon the indescribable grandeur of their great country, written great by the finger of Nature, its inexhaustible natural and moral resources, the intrinsically generous character of its simple and oppressed people, and the abomination of the thought that such a vast and beautiful country should continue to be the plaything of a stupid tyrant, embroidering petticoats for the Virgin, and living at the distance of two thousand leagues.

Among those who had joined the cause without any alloy of sinister, or selfish feelings, was M. de Vonpelt. He was a man of amiable, simple, and unsuspecting character, who had accumulated an immense fortune by a continued succession of fortunate events, which seems to crown the efforts of some favored individuals with success, whether they seek for it or not. He had the forecast to convert his fortune into cash, and deposited it in British funds. But he had committed his own personal ease and



safety, and that of his three beautiful, and inexperienced daughters, on the issue of this dubious stake, merely from a philosophic regard to the great and sacred cause of genuine freedom. Too amiable, and too little ambitious to be stirred up to the contest by envy or aspiring thoughts. He had come to the cause in the simple feeling of well wishing to mankind. He remarked, himself, that no one could suspect him of calculating upon more ease, honor, or wealth, by any change that a revolution could bring. His honest and unsuspecting mind had led him to think well of me from the first, because his daughters did; and he had become attached to me in the same proportion that they had. He had seen enough of the ignorance and presumption of most of the leaders here, as already to have become disgusted with them. My adhesion to the cause inspired him with renewed confidence. His vast wealth and his established character gave him no small influence among the patriot leaders. In fact, though nominally subordinate, he had more real influence than any other man. He would not hear of my having a commission under that of colonel. As it respected the question at issue, he and I differed from Morelos, he being for sallying forth and joining the rising at San Antonio. I had no faith in the opinion that the United States would commit themselves in the contest, and all that we could reasonably expect from that quarter were occasional accessions of adventurous young men, who would come from the impulse of feeling. We thought it best, therefore, to fortify ourselves, and made this place a depot headquarters, and a rallying point for the patriots. It would be a point for the countenance and encouragement of the wavering and disaffected, and it would tend to divert the royal commander from concentrating his whole force against either point. It would harass and dishearten their

forces. These disputes with the chiefs, who differed from us on this point, were always managed on our part with perfect good temper. Sometimes the daughters gave their opinions, too. They answered that from this delightful place, where they could look down upon the world, with a brother to teach them English, and beautiful groves in which to walk, and all manner of whimsical characters with which to amuse themselves, and a few faces on which they might look without injuring their eyes, with plenty of fruits, and water, and such a large and substantial mansion for shelter, and a place of such strength and safety, it would be folly to go away. They asserted that we could do no better than to remain here, and they privately whispered to me, that if I would behave well, they would have a detachment sent out to bring the Condesa and Isabel, and make me happy; and that Mount Mextpal should be the seat of their government. But Katie was for marching to San Antonio, that she might study Yankee faces, insisting that one beau to three ladies was a proportion altogether too scanty.

The first days of my abode here were devoted partly to the study of tactics, and in part to learning the practical branch of military duty by actual training. For this purpose, I interested myself to form a volunteer corps, which should study tactics and drill together. We spent some hours every day in our exercises. I now spoke Spanish with entire fluency, and had no difficulty in becoming acquainted with the chiefs. It was a matter of no small difficulty as well as delicacy, to manage my intercourse with the married ladies of the establishment. As they had little to do, and were addicted to those courses at home, and were here much more in society than they were accustomed to be, intrigues, and squabbles, and frequently charges of their *cortejos*, were occurring daily.

On this subject a considerable quantity of gunpowder was harmlessly burned in duels.

The most considerable of the patriots, and the man who held the present command among them, was Morelos. He was a native ecclesiastic, of the order of deacons. I may remark that there seems to be an instinctive feeling, antecedent to reason, which causes that every human being born in our hemisphere inherits a feeling of independence, and a love of liberty, as his birthright. The clergy of the higher orders were generally European Spanish, and it was well known that between them and the natives of Spanish blood, born in the New World, there has existed a kind of hereditary antipathy. European priests were, of course, for the most part unrelenting royalists. The native priests, on the contrary, generally leaned toward the independence of their country. This man possessed the silent and contemplative appearance, which long training in the peculiar rites, usages and habits of the Roman church generally imposes. So much restraint, and observance, and watching of public opinion, in bad men, foster hypocrisy in the heart. On the face of others it imprints a musing and melancholy character; in him this was peculiarly visible. The dreadful fate which had attended his compatriot and brother, the father Hidalgo, the patriarch, and the first conspicuous victim of insurrection against Ferdinand, had added to this general expression an unalterable thoughtfulness and gloom. He was a man not of uncommon powers, but of considerable reading and reflection, and as I judged, mainly actuated by an innate regard to freedom in joining the cause. He was a man of undoubted courage and firmness. No ways terrified by the terrible catastrophe which befell the father Hidalgo, he seemed to have derived from it more elevation of feeling, and



more unshaken perseverance in the cause. He often passed his evenings with the family of M. de Vonpelt, and attached himself to me from the first moments of our acquaintance. He knew the whole thread of events throughout the whole Mexican empire, from the first dawning of the spirit of independence. His local acquaintance with this vast country, and the character and influence of its inhabitants, was to me a matter of astonishment. You could point to no village or city on the map, with the whole of whose private history he did not seem to be perfectly acquainted. He often passed the evening in giving us details of the insurrection, generally gloomy and terrible, up to this time.

The third evening of my residence in the family, during a most furious tempest of rain, wind and thunder, while the lightning flashed into our subterranean dwelling, and the wind and thunder roared awfully among the mountains, he formed one of the circle, which the uproar of the elements abroad was contracting in a closer sitting, and gave us a succinct narrative of all that he had seen, done and suffered, since he had exchanged his functions of a priest for those of a soldier. These details, in such a place, on such an evening, and by a man of such a countenance, so unalterably solemn and melancholy, with a head, whose baldness in the centre was as if the razor had passed over it, and whose deep thoughts seemed to hold communion with torture and with death, communicated to us the shivering chill of intense feeling. I select from the details of that narrative the account of the fate of the father Hidalgo.

“When I joined him,” said he, “the alarm of insurrection in our country had just sounded from sea to sea. With a holy feeling of devotion to the people of this oppressed country, he had left his quiet and safe duties

of priest, and had girted himself with the sword of patriotism. The people clustered around him like the gathering of the birds when preparing for their aerial excursions. He was flushed with hope and confidence, at the head of forty thousand men. Although his object was to deliver the country forever from the dominion of the parent country, the watch-word was, 'Ferdinand the Seventh, and the Virgin of Guadalupe.' You will suppose that our communion was sweet, for our hearts were alike devoted to this cause. We were both Creoles of the country. Both had renounced the clerical functions, and were equally exposed to the deepest anathemas of the dignitaries of our church. Ours was a holier and more intimate tie of brotherhood, cemented still firmer by community of disgrace and exposure. He advanced upon Guanaxuato, a city of considerable importance, and was joined by Aldama, Allendo, and other distinguished patriots. He captured that city and Valladolid, and was advancing in triumph and in full march upon Mexico. Here he experienced the terrible efficacy of the spiritual armor of our warfare, in a region of so much ignorance and bigotry as this. He was excommunicated and denounced by the priesthood, as an abandoned heretic and an infidel. His accumulating followers, viewing him as an enemy of God and all good men, terrified and awed, melted away from his path, like snow in the sunbeams. He changed his advance to retreat, and fled from one town to another, struggling with superstition, but with his face to the foe. At Guadalajara he was besieged by the royalist chief, Callejo. Defeated, and compelled to retreat, he fled successively, from Zacatecas to San Luis Potosi. His object was to advance toward the American frontier, where the germ of republicanism had been long in vegetation. Velas, a perfidious wretch, who had by the fawning sem-

blance of implicit deference, gained over him the ascendancy of a flatterer, and succeeded in winning his confidence, imparted to him under injunctions of the most profound secrecy, that Colonel Arredondo, who commanded the royal troops under the Conde, was himself in heart a republican, and wished to join the patriots. He projected an interview between them. The unsuspecting father was thus entrapped into an ambush, and was seized, and made a prisoner. I was in another quarter when all this happened. But I obtained the most exact information of his fate. He was immediately conducted to Chihuahua, the metropolis of the *provincias internas*. A council of war was convened, over which General Salcedo presided, subject to the ultimate revision of its sentence by the Conde. He was well known, at that time, to have been disposed to merciful counsels. At least, he would have spared the unhappy victim insult and torture. But the smooth and plausible, yet stern and vindictive father Jerome interposed his counsels with so much effect, that it was decided that he should first endure the torture, and then die.

“He was a venerable old man, and had been a dignitary of the church. He was arrayed with the customary habiliments of his sacerdotal office, in order to be degraded and deposed with more solemnity. He was then brought out by a file of soldiers, and delivered over to a consistory of priests, and they adjudged the nature and extent of his torture. It was adjudged, that as he had grasped the sword of heresy and rebellion with the same hand with which he had been used to raise the consecrated Host, the thumb and fingers of it should be rasped down to the first joint. The dreadful sentence that was read to him was, that he should first suffer this operation, then be shot, and then delivered over to the power of Satan and hell. He



was ordered to prepare for its immediate execution. His right arm was immovably bound with cords to a post, just admitting the thumb and fingers above the end of the post, and they were secured to iron rods. A brazier produced a coarse kind of file, and began the horrible operation. He evidenced the unshaken spirit of a martyr. The feverish flush of agony was indeed visible in his brown and furrowed cheek, and the first filling of the file with the skin and the quick fiber produced a manifest spasmodic quivering over the whole frame. It was the claim of the frail physical and suffering nature. The ascendancy of the higher intellectual principle, sitting on a throne which agonies of mortality could not touch, vindicated the second triumph. They who came with the horrid purpose to exult in his groans, and see him subdued, and expiring under the agony and dismay, went away with far other impressions. He waved the hand that was not manacled. 'I die,' said he, 'a believer and a servant of Him who endured worse than this without shrinking. He who was nailed to the cross will sustain me. This soul is beyond your power, and it exults in the sacredness of the cause for which I die. Think not, when you have murdered an old man, that the cause will expire with him. The groans of the oppressed will raise up other deliverers. If there be present a single person who is a patriot in his heart, and who is restrained by fear, let him learn that there are holy principles that cast out fear; and let him see how a patriot and a Christian can die.' He continued in this way, with a firm countenance and an unfaltering voice, to express his devotion to the cause, until the savage operation was accomplished. They then unbound him, and led him to execution. Even here he was equally undismayed. Before he kneeled down, he exhorted the assembled multitude to arise in their

strength, and break their chains, and cast them in the faces of their oppressors. He expressed, with the prophetic confidence of a dying man, his conviction that the cause of liberty would prevail, and that the whole hemisphere would be completely emancipated; and that, though he was not to be spared to see it, he should learn of it in a better country. He would not allow them to cover his head. He kneeled down, and held up his hand, as a signal for the soldiers to fire, and received his death with undaunted composure. Thus," said Morelos, "died my noble, unshaken compatriot and friend, and if I am to suffer in the same cause, may my last end be like his."

The winds still mustered in their fury. The rains poured, and the Egyptian darkness was only illumined by the glare of lightning. The story, the countenance of Morelos, and the scene, were all in keeping. The roses gradually yielded to the lilies in the countenances of the daughters, as the story advanced. On M. de Vonpelt's sat the undisguised expression of indignation and terror. "Ah!" he exclaimed, "these Creoles are a tamned set of asses. It makes me think of the servile war in old Rome. The army that went against them, armed itself with scourges and whips. The miserable wretches fled from the sight of the lash. Only place before these ignorant fools an excommunication, and they would desert the Saviour himself. We are engaged in von pretty pusiness, to expose ourselves to such an end as this, to give de liperties to such a tamned set of cowards, who will run away even from an invisible danger."

Upon the Misses Vonpelt, the story had the effect to turn their thoughts to the possibility of their undertaking, and to reflect that their father was now obnoxious to the same fate, which fell so terribly on the head of the father Hidalgo. Gay and thoughtless as they generally were,

they were not without deep feeling. The bare supposition of such a catastrophe, suspended over a father so beloved, fixed on their pale and fair faces a deep gloom, succeeded by starting tears. As soon as Morelos had retired, they began to agitate the question, if there were no escape from the position in which they were now placed, and to entreat their father and me to devise some way in which we might all fly together to the United States. But another theme, adroitly introduced, had the effect to turn their thoughts in another direction. Stories of another cast circulated, and another train of images was introduced. Their tears gave place to gaiety, and before we separated for the night, father Hidalgo, and the possible issue of our cause were alike forgotten.

I made all the progress that I could desire, in becoming acquainted with our associates in the camp, and with the ladies I had more popularity than I could have desired; for they took occasion to tell me, that so sober a man, and so little addicted to gallantry, they feared, would not know how to fight. Every new view of the men gave me more disheartening apprehensions of the issue of a cause depending upon such leaders. Had they listened to Morelos, they would have had subordinations, discipline, system, economy, and sufficient supplies of provisions for a siege. But there was no compulsion, and no subordination. The resources of a month were wasted in a week. The camp rung with patriotic songs, and the reckless gaiety of the young men, who felt themselves far from all restraint; and presented an aspect of frolic and mirth, that was peculiarly fascinating to such a people. Even under the massive dome of our quarters, new stories of intrigues were constantly getting air, and their intrigues, pride, parties and heart-burning, furnished ample materials for the thousand and one narratives of scandal.



Almost every night brought its ball and fandango, which the Misses Vonpelt and myself, however reluctantly, were compelled to attend. The country for twenty leagues around was put in requisition, to furnish the requisite good cheer. The poor, plundered peasants had no other redress, than to imprecate curses, equally on the heads of royalists and patriots. There was so much riot and dissipation, so much abundance and idleness, such barbarian affectation of glare and splendor, that I doubt not a considerable number of these patriots, male and female, would have been glad to terminate the campaign and the revolution with only this reservation for themselves, that they should take up their final residence in this abode of pleasure and plenty. For my part, I felt myself in such demand with the dames and sisters of the officers, that I was rapidly getting rid of that bashfulness that creates such a barrier between the people of different countries. If I were disposed to go into the annals of female intrigue, I could easily fill a volume with the adventures which occurred while I was here. I turned from such novel manners with indifference; and were it not an assumption not to be expected at my years, I might say, with loathing.

The only real satisfaction which I experienced, apart from my reading and study, was in the delightful family circle of M. de Vonpelt. On this charming table plain, I could have enjoyed solitude in the scenery and the contemplation of nature. But the incessant activity and bustle gave it the air of a paltry, crowded village, neither town nor country, neither solitude nor society, although, besides fandangoes, we had our parties, dignified by the grand Spanish designation, *tertulias*. Escaped from the chattering ignorance of these affairs, there was an infantine frankness, mixed with feeling and good sense, in this affectionate family, that made all the hours which we

could have to ourselves, pass most pleasantly. Every returning day gave me higher views of them. Their simplicity I found to be that singleness of mind and heart, which I have always considered the highest endowment of the best minds. Amidst all their gaiety, there was the fearless deportment of conscious rectitude and self-respect. The father had been originally a Lutheran Protestant, and the assumption of respect for Catholic rites and usages had been made out of a decent regard to the customs and prejudices of the people among whom we lived. As we became more closely and intimately acquainted, I found a thousand points of mental union, as though we had been brought up together. Struck with this, De Vonpelt often questioned me if I could not speak a little Dutch, and if I was sure there was no Saxon blood in my veins. The manners, morals and pursuits of this assemblage of mountain banditti were as abhorrent to their feelings as to mine. But, with the happy and sunshiny temperament of joyous and innocent natures, they rather drew from the whole scene food for mirth and amusement, than for dissatisfaction and harsh remarks. We never took a walk, or made the circuit of the camp, or took part in a review, or returned from a fandango, but what they brought away an amusing anecdote, or became better acquainted with some incident that furnished us with conversation and diversion. Above all, they managed with a good sense, modesty and propriety, altogether unaccountable, from their limited acquaintance and experience with human nature, the numerous professions of admiration and proffers of love, from the young heroes of our camp. They were the undisputed belles and beauties of the whole circle, and yet they were not pursued by envy. In this amiable family I was in a few days as entirely domesticated as if I had been, what I was invariably

called, a son and brother. I hoped that the bustle and agitation of this new scene, and the duties of a colonel in a regiment of ignorant and refractory recruits of another nation, and the air of quiet and home in the family, would banish that deep feeling of painful remembrance, which was causing my thoughts every day to wander back to the sycamores of the Conde's palace. In this hope I was disappointed. Like an evil conscience this feeling not only followed me, but, instead of being alleviated was embittered by time.

De Vonpelt often observed, as we separated for the evening, that with a competent supply of the good things of life, and one or two more agreeable families as neighbors, he should be satisfied to live and to die in that place. The very mention of leaving the mountain was sufficient to bring paleness to the cheeks of the daughters.



## CHAPTER XIV.

## BATTLE OF MT. MEXTPAL.

THE question, whether to go or to stay, which had been so much discussed, was now to be settled by circumstances over which we had no control. We had just formed our family circle for the evening, and De Vonpelt had just remarked that he had recovered the flesh he had lost when he first fled to Mextpal, when a dispatch was handed us from Morelos who had, upon a rumor of an approaching force, descended with the *élite* of his forces to the subjacent plains. It informed us that the Conde had arrived at the foot of the mountain with a large force, partly regular troops under Colonel Arredondo, and of Creole troops under Illisondo; that his horse had scattered themselves in all the region; that a number of little parties, which we were obliged to baptize by the name of foraging parties, but which were, in fact, plundering detachments, had been captured; that no quarter had been given, and that they had been subjected to promiscuous military execution. He stated all the difficulties of our cause; that all his remonstrance about the necessity of laying in a supply of provisions for a siege had been utterly unavailing; that we had provisions for no more than a week, and that our only course was to beat the enemy and drive them from the country, that we might continue to find supplies; or to

evade them by stratagem; or to break our way through their array, and take up our march for San Antonio, where report represented the patriots as successful. He wished an immediate descent with all our forces, to join him before the morning. For me, the volunteer regiment was assigned as my command, and my commission as its colonel was made out by the provisional junta with all the formalities. This, at least, put an end to doubting and disputation as to our course. All now admitted the wisdom of remonstrance against our folly in not laying in provisions. Had we had them we might now have defied all the forces of Mexico. Each threw the fault upon others and admitted that now we had nothing to do but to fight. The Misses Vonpelt, in tears and in agonies of terror, clung alternately to their father and to me. The dames, the young ladies, the servants, the soldiers, all crowded together about us while we read the orders, that every man among us who could bear arms should be ready to descend to the plains, fully equipped, in an hour. Our glees and catches and patriotic songs were all changed to mourning. Nothing was seen in faces, that could be bleached, but paleness, and nothing was heard but the language of consternation and dismay. Those of our young heroes who had been loudest in their windy fierceness, while the foe was neither heard nor seen, were now as mute and pale as the rest.

Having issued the orders, which were peremptory, and admitted no exceptions, De Vonpelt, the general, and myself the colonel, retired to our military wardrobe. His short, round figure was soon accommodated with the gaudy regimentals of a brigadier general. The glitter of a profusion of lace was in good keeping with a face as round and as ruddy as a full moon. "Mein Gott!" said he, "now this looks like Dresden. Do I look prave now? Ah! my

poor girls, it is a tamned pusiness after all, this fighting for de liperties." In turn he assisted me in arranging my official costume. I confess that I felt sufficiently ridiculous, with my heavy lace epaulets, and a sword of as formidable dimensions as that shown by Bonaparte to the Mamelukes. You may laugh, if you choose; but I thought of myself, preceded by the thick Saxon, who seemed, in his new habiliments, as stiff as a poker, and was surrounded by brawny Creoles; and of myself, but poorly qualified, in my own estimation, for anything but peaceful pursuits, in the ridiculous comparison, which forced itself upon me in a moment. You have seen a New England pig, recently garnished about the neck with a fine new yoke, how he would raise his knees every step a few inches higher than was necessary in order that he might strike them against it. Our gait in our new armor struck me as an exact parallel of this.

The young ladies clung to their father and me to the last moment, and in voices scarcely audible for sobbing, begged us to take care of ourselves, and they gave me the most solemn charge to bring their father back again safe. The tears chased one another over the cheeks of the Saxon father. "Mein Gott," said he, "my tear girls, you will break your father's heart. Now, as daughters of a Tuch general, you ought not to cry at all, at all." I felt it necessary to give the parting an air of gaiety, and I begged a lock of the blonde tresses of each of them, and told them that they ought to send us away, as the French ladies used to do their *chevaliers*, with smiles and kisses. These are the omens to give a stout heart for battle. "I promise you, my fair sisters, to come back no more wounded than just enough to render us interesting, and with a whole volume of exploits, to be related by nobody but ourselves, and furthermore, pledge you my word, to



escort you safe and sound to the Yankee camp at San Antonio."

In calling our muster-roll we found no small number of our young enthusiasts for liberty reported as too ill for marching. Most of these young men had been the night before at the fandango, and had been seized with this disqualifying sickness since that time. But we were a very considerable body, who were assembled to march. We moved on, as Milton says, "darkling," and treading on each others' heels, and stumbling upon the rocks in the darkness. Of course we had some Spanish curses followed, however, by the sign of the cross, and a prayer to the patron saints for forgiveness. We were dimly lighted on our way with torches. It was midnight when we reached the plain and united ourselves with Morelos. At the distance of half a league over the plain were seen complete ranges of fires, one extremity of which touched the base of the mountain on our right, and the other on our left, so that we were completely hemmed in by a semicircle. We were immediately ushered into a council of war. As usual, we had discordant opinions, and almost as many plans as there were individuals. But in a storm at sea, I have remarked, when the cause labors, and the ship and crew are in equal danger, there is a common feeling in the ignorant and timid to remit their usual self-importance. The real helmsman is no longer kept back by envy, but is called for by general opinion to come forward and take his proper place. Our opinion was in entire coincidence with the determined counsel of Morelos, that we should place in advance a great number of scouts or sentinels, who should give us an alarm if there were any advance of the foe, that our troops might take as much repose as consisted with sleeping on our arms, and that with the first dawn of the morning we should at-

tack them with our whole force and cut our passage through their centre.

I had scarcely retired to the tent assigned me, before Fergus, who, I should have remarked, was a sergeant in my regiment, brought me a couple of letters. They had come with other dispatches by a flag of truce. Among these dispatches was a proclamation offering a general amnesty to all that would lay down their arms and surrender themselves to the royal commander. They had excepted from this pardon a few cases, among which were Morelos, De Vonpelt and myself. The first letter was from my former pupil, Dorothea. It was in indifferent English, and was long and rather difficult to decipher. The purport of it was, that her father and she were yet willing to forgive my indifference, if I would now see things in the light of my true interest. She declared in strong terms her continued regard for me, and that her father had so much influence with the government that he could yet procure me a pardon; and that our cause was known to be utterly hopeless; that if I persisted, I could expect nothing better than a military execution; that I could have no hope from any supposed influence over the heart of Doña Isabel, for that it was a fixed affair that she was to be united to Colonel De Oli at the close of the campaign, which, from appearances, was likely to be very short; that her father would even be willing to interpose in behalf of De Vonpelt, provided there were no truth in the report that I was to marry Jeannette; that she trusted to my good sense to choose between a fortune, liberty, and an affectionate wife, and an immediate and ignominious death; that the least notice to Colonel Arredondo that I was disposed to accept of her hand and fortune, she had been assured, would extend to me a full pardon among the rest.

The other was from Doña Isabel, and contained only the following words:

“Blessed Virgin! do I live to hear that you are a rebel officer, in arms against my father, and proclaimed a spy and a traitor? While these terrible denunciations are issued against you here, you are making the mountain ring with your revelries, living in riot on the plunder of the poor peasants, solacing yourself with the smiles of the easy Jeannette, and, like a butterfly, wantoning from flower to flower, when tired of her. Well, you will now have a chance to meet Don De Oli, as you have wished. I am sure of one thing, that harshly as I have met all his advances, he regards me more, and would have remembered me longer than you have done. Would to God I had met with nothing to seduce my affections from the tranquil tenor of my duty. I might then have been a wife, tranquil, if indifferent, and an obedient child, making my worn and harassed father happy. As it is, you will live on, and take your pleasure, and amuse yourself with Jeannette; and for me, let events turn as they may, there is no escape from this intolerable pressure at my heart. For me there is no resource but to die. But rebel, or royalist, vanquished or victorious, you ought to be dear to me, and you are so. Remind Jeannette that she too once professed to be my friend.”

From the tenor of these letters I discovered clearly, what I had more than suspected before, that our movements were all reported at Durango, that we were surrounded by invisible danger, and had traitors in our camp. I discovered, too, that the character of my affectionate reception in De Vonpelt's family, and my brotherly attentions to his daughters were grossly misrepresented.



Indeed, I had received insinuations of this sort from the ladies in the camp. I saw but too much reason to believe that the natural impulses of human feeling, united with pride, resentment, a sense of duty, and the spiritual representations of the father, would actually and speedily bring about the desired union of Isabel with Don De Oli. I had never distinctly allowed myself to think that I had any hopes there. But shadowy visions, against myself, would play about my imagination, anticipations, so blissful and so exquisitely dear, that without definition or outline, they still looked to a different issue. "But they are not quite sure," thought I, "that the campaign is to terminate so soon, and so successfully for Don De Oli. At least, if he is to be married when he returns, I will strive to detain him here as long as I can." I found that meditating on the probable event of our being beaten in the morning, and my suffering immediate military execution, in case I should survive, and his returning to claim and receive his bride, was an excellent preparative for intrepidity and determination to fall on the field in case of defeat. "I will either conquer," I thought, "or I will die. If the former is not reserved for me, the latter will be the consummation to be wished." I felt that I had not philosophy enough to be willing to live after I knew Isabel to be in the possession of another, much less of Don De Oli; and with that reflection I went to sleep.

I was just taking the comfort of a tranquil dream, in which I supposed myself in New England, on a fine summer's morn, and sitting down to our customary rural breakfast at my father's house. I heard the boblincolns chattering in the meadows; I saw the dear and well remembered face of my mother, and she was telling me, with tender apprehensions, that I looked ill and as though I had not slept. In the midst of this dream the bugles

broke in on the stillness of the morning and awakened me from this delightful dream to the thrilling and contrasted consciousness of my actual position. I had made all the little arrangements that circumstances would allow, in preparation for whatever might be the issue of the encounter. I had so provided, that in case of my death, none but Fergus would know where my effects were, and if he survived, as, not being obnoxious to the government, there was a greater possibility that he might, he was directed, and he promised me that he would attempt to make his way to Boston, and remit my property, the gift of the Condesa and Isabel, to my parents. I also left a short letter for them, and another for Isabel. I hope it will not be inferred that I was more timid or would fight the less hard because I had not yet worn off the impressions of a religious education. I made a short but fervent surrender of my hopes and fears, my will and my wishes, the interest of my dying and immortal nature, to the Great Disposer of events. I examined my motives, and on the whole my heart did not misgive me. A calm, I might almost hope, a holy serenity, came over me. Never did morning dawn upon me in a state of so much exultation of feeling. Our army, if a vast mass of Indian, mulatto and Creole rabble could be called by such a respectable name, was in a few minutes in order, or rather disorder, of battle. The advantage of our assiduous trainings on the mountain was now conspicuous in my regiment. It was something more uniform and regular than the rest of the host, and was drawn up with something more of order and martial array, inspiring confidence in themselves and infusing it into the rest. The centre was voluntarily assigned to me and my regiment. I remarked that my poor fellows looked ill and pale as the full array of the opposing army opened upon us

with the increasing brightness of the morning. We had no music but the sound of monstrous wooden bugles, the neighing of our horses, and the braying of our donkeys. In the centre of the royal army was the splendid Cadiz regiment, with a fine band, gay uniform, and boasting to be one of the best disciplined regiments in Europe. The Conde with his aides, among whom was Colonel De Oli, mounted on fine chargers, were seen at the head of this regiment. The army was drawn up in line, whose wings were a little inclined toward the mountains. A deep gully, called *Rio Seco*, was between us and them. We were, perhaps, as numerous as our foe; but it was easy to see that their more martial, regular and uniform appearance struck a thrilling sensation through our disorderly multitudes. Each army waited for the other to cross the *Rio Seco*, that they might attack the other while climbing up the banks. Every demonstration of defiance to provoke this advance was made by either party. Our bugles pealed a deafening clamor. The Cadiz regiment replied by a slow and grand national air on the full band. Each army slowly approached the gully, and was now so near each other that mutual terms of reviling, in which the Spanish is wonderfully rich, could be distinctly heard. Every opprobrious term of crimination and recrimination which the language could furnish was exhausted, and while defiances and execrations were thus bandying backward and forward, our troops foamed with rage. I was delighted to witness this, for I was fully persuaded that our troops would fight only from one of two impulses—confidence or rage. It was sufficiently obvious that we had not the first, and our enemy was gratuitously furnishing the other. We remained in this position looking at each other, uttering flourishes of defiance, and when they paused abusing each other, the sun arose, and a slight breeze arising with it dis-



pelled dense banks of mist that concealed parts of the opposing armies from each other. I had expected every moment that they would open upon us discharges of artillery. But it seems that their pieces had just arrived with the rising sun. We had not a single cannon. The moment their artillery came up they opened upon us a sweeping and deadly discharge, and the thrilling cries of the wounded and the dying, in the intermission of their terrible crash, first rang in my ears.

I comprehended at once, that for our raw and untrained rabble, many of whom had never seen anything more than the killing of a deer or a buffalo, to stand and receive these sweeping discharges, without the possibility of revenge or annoyance in return would be instant and total rout. I requested Morelos to allow me to cross the ravine with my regiment, and see if we could not make an impression upon the foe. It was granted me. I addressed my men for a moment. I put them in mind of the estimation they bore in the army; that this was the first time we had had a chance to acquire glory and show our devotion to our cause. "Let us avenge," I said, "the charges of cowardice that they have thrown upon us. Follow me and we conquer or die." They answered me by *vivas*, and shouts, and requested to be led on; and we started in quick-step for the bank. Such is the effect of sympathy, that the same multitude, who would not have received two more discharges of artillery without running, instantly caught the enthusiasm of my regiment, and with a terrible and unanimous shout that made the very mountains ring, started almost on a run. We were in the ravine and out of exposure in a moment. We halted there a minute to take breath, and by the same simultaneous impulse we sprang for the summit of the opposite bank. Those of more strength and agility than the rest reached the summit with

a bound. Had our foe had the wisdom to have charged us here with the bayonet it would have been the end of us and the battle, too. But, as if panic-struck with our electric impulse, they remained in their ranks, and renewed the fire of their cannon, and gave us the fire of their small arms by platoons. We were, as I should have remarked, all on foot, and armed with carbines and spears. We returned them one deadly discharge with our carbines and rushed upon them with our spears. It was at once a perfect *mêlée*, a rencontre of man with man, and in which, in many instances, the opposite parties were acquainted. Of course personal malice came in for its share of influence in the fury of the combat. It furnished just the field in which these men would be most likely to have experience. It was an army of duellists, of personal struggles for mutual assassination. Our spears stood us in excellent stead against their horses. They became disordered and recoiled upon their own disordered ranks. They evidently had the disadvantage in the first "tug of battle." Had we possessed any discipline, it would have been an entire rout to them. But their commanders saw their disadvantage, sounded a retreat, and their troops separated from the *mêlée* in good order. Our eagerness, as they undoubtedly foresaw, had well nigh ruined us. We strove to stem the current of pursuit, but we were carried along with it. We lost everything that resembled a front, and became a furious, rushing crowd. Our enemy retreated until they saw irregular masses of our men in advance of the rest. They faced and attacked us in return, in firm column and in good order. A change of things so unexpected staggered the advance. In a moment it began to fall back, producing confusion in the rear. At this dreadful moment their horses dashed upon us, and shrieks,

groans and rout ensued on every side. The ground was covered with bodies and was slippery with blood. Morelos, De Vonpelt and myself, together with a few more of the undismayed, placed ourselves between the fighting and the retreating. We assured them that to be forced back to the bank was inevitable destruction, and as no quarter was expected, not a man could escape. Partly by these considerations, and partly by shame and threats, we persuaded them to face the foe again. We arranged them in a kind of form, and to sustain ourselves against the charges of their horses, we placed our spears on the ground, at an angle of forty-five degrees, and received the horses with the spears in the breast. This maneuver produced another recoil of the foe, and there was again an interval between us and them. The action was renewed by discharges of musketry along the whole line of either army. Here we should have had the advantage again but for the terrible havoc inflicted by their artillery, which, at every discharge, swept a clear path through our whole line. Morelos uttered his fierce cry for another charge, and we attacked them again with fixed spears. In this charge, accident confronted me for the first time with Don De Oli. I cried to him in Spanish to dismount and we could meet on equal terms. But whether he disdained to attack a rebel colonel, or whether he was unwilling to fight on foot, or whether he reserved himself for a more fortunate opportunity, I cannot say. His first motion was as if towards me; but he instantly wheeled his horse, and rode away. In this charge we fairly pierced our way through their centre, and the celebrated Cadiz regiment parted as if by consent and allowed us an almost unmolested passage through. We blew our bugles, for forming our line in their rear. We had experienced too bitterly our want of discipline, to be in haste to at-



tack them again; and they had suffered too severely, and had too well proved our manhood, to think of molesting us. We saw the strange spectacle of two armies retiring from heaps of slaughter, and from each other, as if by mutual consent. The enemy sent us a flag of truce and proposed a parley. We consented and it was arranged that we should have an armistice. The terms were settled directly. They were that each army should bury its dead, and aid their wounded unmolested; that then we should be allowed to march from the mountain in the direction of San Antonio, or in any other direction we should choose, undisturbed; and they were not to be assaulted by us in retiring, as they agreed to do, to a small village at the distance of a league and a half.

These terms were settled on both sides, and troops speaking the same language, that were but an hour before engaged in mortal struggle, were now mournfully occupied in searching for their dead and wounded. The losses on both sides were nearly equal. It has been observed in all ages, that the most deadly foes mingle in this sad business, apparently laying aside personal animosity, and bitterness. Such was the case now. Fergus, who had fought like a hero, found and recognized among the dead a member of the Conde's family, who had been a fellow-servant with him. The tears ran down his cheeks, and he raised the Irish howl of mourning. Mutual aid was given in burying the dead and aiding the wounded. The priests performed funeral rites for either army. The melancholy and thrilling chant, *De profundis*, mingled with the low, faint groans of the wounded and the dying. Having made these arrangements, and attended to our wounded, we prepared to return to the mountains to carry into effect the agreement to leave the mountain as soon as possible and start for San Antonio. In returning

I was walking with Morelos and De Vonpelt, we passed so near the Conde and Don De Oli as to be recognized by them. "I beg' you, Sir," I cried to Don De Oil, "to have the goodness to inform Doña Isabel, when next you see her, that you have on this occasion declined my courtesy as on a former occasion I declined yours."

There can be no scene more tender than the return of warriors from the uproar of battle, and the strife of blood, safe and unwounded to their friends. You may be certain that we claimed the victory. In fact, the very circumstances of our armistice warranted us in the claim. The battle had indeed assured to us the fruits of victory, and all that we could have asked, an unmolested march to San Antonio. I was amused, as we were met by the women and children, many of whom had come down the mountain to get the first tidings of the battle, to see how immediately after the first burst of tears and congratulations, each one of our comrades was transformed into an Alexander. I almost envied the reception of De Vonpelt by his daughters. For the first time they seemed selfish. Broken exclamations, mingled prayers and thanksgiving, filled up an interval of some moments. Morelos, who had performed the noblest duties of a patriot soldier, and who seemed raised above the sympathy of humanity, even he melted at this scene and let fall natural tears down his furrowed cheek. "I return my humble thanksgiving to the God of battles, my dear children," said he, "that your father and this young man have been returned safe to you, and both covered with glory. I thank God, too, in witnessing this scene, that I have no children. The issue of this great struggle can personally affect only me. The sympathies which I feel for this great and oppressed country, leaves me to mourn for the destruction which is to come." The ruddy face of the Saxon was

bathed in tears of parental affection, and he could not refrain from sobbing. In battle he had been unshrinking in its hottest forefront. Now he wept like a child. After he had become a little composed, he embraced me, and presented me to his daughters, as one who had done much in producing the success of the action, which Morelos confirmed in terms, improper for me to repeat. Even Fergus received his share of compliments, which he repaid by extolling the heroism of my crossing the ravine, to the clouds. In short, we liberally praised one another. The Saxon was delighted with this joyous commencement of our warfare, and was sanguine in its joyful termination. "Mein Gott," said he, "ve vill see the country free und happy yet, und ve vill peat the liperties out of the tamned Dons, und they vill vish they had not proscribed the honest Tuchman yet." The timid welcome of the girls to me was sufficiently affectionate. Less would have been out of keeping with their frank and tender natures. More would have violated their nice sense of decorum. Their glistening eyes said to me as many kind and impressive things as any words or embraces could have done. For the first hour of our return, we were perhaps the happiest people in the world.



## CHAPTER XV.

## THE TWO CAMPS UNITED.

I PASS over the scene of packing and arranging and preparing for the march which we were now compelled to make. It was softened by the circumstance that all were in the same predicament. The ladies were for the most part pleased with the prospect. Their range would be extended and their amusement diversified. For me, I have no love for moving, the very name applies oil of vitriol to my nerves. Everything that could be furnished in the way of a horse or mule was put in requisition and was either loaded with a pack or harnessed. The line of carts and loaded mules, when formed at the foot of the mountains, was a mile in length.

We took our last sleep under the vault of the cavern of Mextpal, and commenced our descent from the mountain at the dawn of the morning after the battle. The day before had so abundantly drawn upon the resources of our feelings that I hoped that we should have passed away from this singular and romantic residence without emotion. But to some it was identified with the idea of security, to others associated with the remembrances of balls and fandangoes. All seemed to go away with the painful feeling of leaving home. The countenances of the Misses Vonpelt were overcast with apprehension and anx-

iety. They had been perfectly satisfied with things as they were here, and to leave this place was as the departure of our first parents from the Garden of Eden. The very circumstance that the world was all before them, was appalling. Sensitive and affectionate natures, as theirs were, cling to privacy, quiet, and domestic joys, and "that dear ark, the home." They had been quiet and retired here in the midst of all the bustle. The scene before us, as we descended, was sublimely impressive. The mists were rolling away from the sides of the mountains, and the sun was pouring his rising radiance upon their hoary cliffs. The battlefield was distinctly visible to us, and seemed spread directly under our feet. A few people, here and there, apparently mourning over their dead, and at that distance only visible as moving atoms, were seen on the field. Jeannette pointed them out to us, and supposed them engaged in the pious office of taking a farewell look at the spot, where friends, left on the field of honor, were taking their final repose; and "Oh!" she added, "you cannot conceive, with what oppressive throbings of the heart, we yesterday morning looked upon the mingled conflict of this field. We could distinctly hear the shouts, the feebler crash of small arm, and the more terrible explosion of artillery, so much the more awful, as we knew, it was the discharge of the enemy. I almost conceived that I could feel the air of the balls whistling by me. I turned away for fear, that by intense looking, I should be able to see my dear father and you in the midst of the struggle, falling and trampled under foot. No view, no reasoning could afford us any clue to determine which side was victorious. Oh! that I had words to explain to you our agony of suspense, from the time when the firing ceased to that joyous moment of your arrival. We were clasped in each other's arms in

earnest prayer, afraid to look forward to see the messenger with his tidings and yet anxious beyond description to obtain intelligence.

"Now that we are going away in health and safety, I have forebodings and an oppression of heart that I cannot account for. This is a charming place, and we have been so happy, tranquil and secure. Never shall I pass as pleasant days again as I have spent in that vaulted cavern in view of this beautiful world, outstretched below me, kindled with the glories of the morning or gilded with the fading and mellow splendor of the setting sun."

"Then," added Kate, "there are more battles, more of these heartrending suspenses to encounter. Foolish girl! when the proscription came and we fled I felt an idle satisfaction in fancying pleasant adventures and gratified curiosity. I see it will be a sad business and we cannot always expect those we love to come off as yesterday."

"Now, my tear son," said the Saxon, "stop your ears when my weak girls talk this way. Girls, you are not fit to be children of a soldier. You ought not to say a word to him that will not tend to harden his heart and make him a true soldier. You would make us both have hearts of butter. For my part, I am right glad to leave this tammed hole in the rocks. Give me a good stone house and no more fightings for the liperties." Katie and Etta had forgotten how very lately a greater field for beaux and a better opportunity for the study of Yankee faces had been considered the only want of which they had complained. We were now about to supply that want without losing any of the good things that we had here, that I should be the only loser, for that among so many fine young men as they should meet there, I foresaw that I should be overlooked. To all this, Etta thoughtfully replied that the times were getting too sober for jesting,



that she should be well satisfied with the society she had had, so that she could be sure it would be continued to her. The women about us generally consoled themselves with the prospects of a new range for fandangoes and the probability of seeing something more of the world. Some stumbled over the rocks by themselves. Others leaned on the arms of their *cortejos* or husbands. The dogs barked. The children cried. The servants and *cargadores* were loaded with baggage, and in this way we descended to the plain, where the servants had arranged our horses and the heavier part of our baggage. We continued to walk on until the procession had crossed the Rio Seco, and on the opposite bank we passed directly through those points of the battlefield, where the greatest destruction had occurred. The eyes of the young ladies were filled as they surveyed the traces of the havoc, the ground drenched and still reeking with blood, the soil ploughed up by the wheels of the enemy's artillery and the fresher graves arranged in lines, which made the number of tenants seem even greater than it was. De Vonpelt, who had fought the day before like a hero, sickened and turned pale as he surveyed this prodigious effusion of human blood which yesterday had flowed in veins, as warm as ours. Morelos walked thoughtfully over the field with the same tranquil and unalterable expression of melancholy. It took up no small bit of time to get our women, servants and children on horseback, in carts, and carriages, on asses and mules. Every tenant of the mountain was somehow provided for in this way. The slightly wounded were placed in the baggage wagon. Those who could not bear removal were sent with a flag to a village near by and recommended to the mercy of the enemy. In a couple of hours this straggling procession, that seemed to cover the plain, took up the line of march.

At another time I should have expected to find an intense interest in this journey. Nature was just as varied and beautiful as though she had been arrayed for the contemplation of a single, thoughtful and solitary traveler. But the hurry of a march, the distraction of thought which ensues from finding yourself participating in the same toils, pleasures and events with such a multitude, naturally turn the eye and the mind from the contemplation of nature to the concerns and the little pleasures of your fellow beings. The difficulty of finding food and water for such a multitude in a country so little inhabited was a formidable impediment to that reckless tranquillity necessary for the pleasantness of a journey. Quarrels and petty vexations, the giving out of horses and breaking down of carriages, the screaming of children, and such other miseries were frequently occurring. I had often been struck with the romantic beauty of the scene of our encampments when my small party was journeying to this country. The encampment of an army, attended by women and children, furnished a view still more picturesque and imposing. The army halts on the banks of a running stream. The beasts are unharnessed. A thousand hatchets attack the groves to furnish fuel for preparing supper and fires for the night. The long ranges of tents whiten in the fading light of the day. A cheerful and bustling city sprung up as if by enchantment. Visits and parties are projected. The confused murmur of the thousand voices is heard. The soldier whistles as his supper is preparing, and there is always some scraping of the violin and thumming of the guitar. The ranges of fires furnish another source of beauty. Dry and combustible wood is sought, and by its bright blaze everything in the camp is still more visible than by the light of day.

The only remark that occurred to me in relation to our grand object was that the people all were, or feigned to be, true patriots, and we were welcomed as deliverers by the people, who would have gladly seen us all in the Red Sea. We took them at their word and caressed them for their forced patriotism, which brought to us all that their means could furnish. As soon as we approached a village, a settlement or a town, the domestic animals and the fowls all seemed to understand that we were carnivorous animals. The cattle and the pigs fled from our path and the fowls flew screaming away. In fact, like the grasshoppers of Egypt, we cleared everything that was eatable out of our way. We passed two or three considerable towns, among them Lanedo, and they were so occupied and fortified by royal troops that we deemed it expedient to pass around them without attempting an attack. At each place we sent in a flag proposing to pass the town unmolested on condition that certain supplies should be furnished us, for which we were to pay a fair price, and that no annoyance should be attempted on either side. At the Rio Grande some companies of royal provincials made a night assault upon our camp, which produced a great deal of consternation, in which some of our young men behaved badly. But we soon found out the strength and position of the foe and easily drove them away. The mutual criminations and charges of cowardice, during this attack, resulted in producing two duels in the morning, in one of which one of the parties was slain, and the other dangerously wounded. We did not much regret the slain, for he had been quarrelsome and unruly on the mountain, and although he fell in a duel, had been a notorious coward.

The first news we got of the Royal Army was here. The Conde's forces were much better mounted than we



were. They had marched from the mountain by a shorter route, and at the time we were crossing the Rio Grande they had probably arrived at San Antonio. It appeared that the Conde intended to make his permanent headquarters there, for he had passed with his whole household establishment. This intelligence went to convince us that we should have an efficient campaign and plenty of fighting.

The patriots, with their allies from the United States, had been engaged in the siege of San Antonio, which place was on the eve of capitulating, when the Conde arrived with his forces and raised the siege. The united forces of the patriots, awed by the imposing force which the Conde brought, retired five miles from the town, and entrenched themselves behind the beautiful little river which waters it. We sent forward messengers to advise them of our approach; the exhilaration of our men may be imagined, when, after such a long march, we at length saw the white tents of our allies. They received us with great joy, discharges of cannon, beating of drums, and every possible demonstration of welcome. Congratulations in English and Spanish were exchanged, the usual eager questions asked, and it seemed the meeting of a band of brothers. For myself, no one can tell my feelings, when, in one part of the camp, I saw the stars and stripes fluttering in the breeze, and viewed the well remembered countenances and costumes, and heard the language of my own dear country. The first glance among the troops from the United States convinced me that they were of standing and character. My astonishment and joy may be imagined when I ascertained that one of the first officers of this establishment was a graduate and classmate of mine in my own *Alma Mater*. My communion with him, of course, was sweet. I had the pleasure of in-

roducing this young gentleman, as well as a number of other respectable young men from the United States, to our chief, Morelos, and to De Vonpelt and his fair daughters. The delight of both parties was visible—of our chiefs to see highminded and educated young men united to their cause, and of my young compatriots, to be introduced to such beautiful girls, whose deportment and the richness of whose dress evinced so much rank and fashion; while they, in turn, found all their anticipations more than realized in these fine young men. The solemn face of Morelos relaxed for a moment. De Vonpelt capered for joy that he could not conceal. “Now, mein Gott,” said he, “if dis pe not Sharmony itself! Can’t you speak Tuch, young gentlemen? Oh! it is such men that is de ting to peat de liperties out of the Dons.” When we were left to ourselves, even the sage Katie and the meek Etta congratulated me in high glee, that now they had hopes, that they should not fail to find a beau, and that I should be in less danger of not being remembered, for the sake of an equal partition. Fergus’s head, too, swam with joy; for there was not only a great supply of whisky in the camp, but English was spoken there; there were also a number of his compatriots from the green island, who spoke with the knowing brogue.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## TWICE A CAPTIVE.

Better be  
*Where the extinguished Spartans still are free,  
In the proud charnel of Thermopylæ.*

—BYRON.

THE first night after the junction I passed in the tent of my classmate. He gave me a succinct, but most interesting, narrative of his fortune since we had separated from each other in the halls of our *Alma Mater*. As the character and the fate of that interesting body of young men, who were now united with the Mexican patriots, and many of whom at this moment fill the first offices in Louisiana, have never yet been given to the public, and as they are henceforward identified in the same cause with myself, I shall take leave to digress from the thread of my narrative to give you a very brief outline of the rise and progress of this expedition to Texas, as my classmate gave it to me.

Among the first adherents of Hidalgo, whose fate has been mentioned, was Don Jose Bernardo Gutierrez, whom we shall designate by his customary appellation, Bernardo. He was a native of a small town on the banks of the Rio Grande, in the province of New Santander. He



was originally a silversmith by trade, and by unusual elegance in his art he had amassed a handsome fortune. After the execution of Hidalgo he was obliged to fly. He made his way to the United States by land, and his property was confiscated. His first object, after his arrival there, was to raise an interest in the cause of Mexico. His plan was to obtain the countenance of the Government, enlist volunteers, whose thoughts he could contrive to turn toward this El Dorado, this region of gold, and penetrate with them by the way of the Sabine, into the interior. But the wise and calculating government of the United States had not yet seen the efforts of the Mexicans sufficiently matured to give him any public countenance. Mr. Clay had not yet been heard alternately in song and thunder upon this subject. Bernardo returned to Natchitoches, on the Spanish frontier, without pecuniary means and without any public demonstration in his favor. He was still full of hope and fired with zeal. Like many other men, self-denominated patriots, it was difficult to ascertain which element preponderated in him, revenge, or a love of liberty, cupidity and ambition, or a desire to liberate his country. He was destitute alike of genuine moral and physical courage, was of limited understanding, savage in his temperament, and coarse and repulsive in his manners. But he had great practical adroitness at intrigue, and that undoubting confidence in his cause, which is so indispensable in a partisan. This unshaking confidence led him still to hope when others despaired, and to persevere when others forsook the cause. Had I time to trace him in detail, he was, all in all, singular in character and as singular in fortune. I can only find time here to record the last singular incident in his life, by which he acquired a certain kind of notoriety. It was this same man, who, after a great diversity of for-

tune, was commander in the province where the emperor Iturbide landed from Great Britain.

A party of gentlemen at Natchitoches, many of whom now fill the most responsible stations in the country, were at this time disposed to aid Bernardo in his plans, or at least to lend their assistance to the fermenting principle of republicanism in the adjacent Spanish country. They could not expect to succeed to any extent, in an expedition into that country, unless they could carry with them the efficacy of a name of some distinguished native of the country. Such a character was offered in Bernardo. They selected him, therefore, as the covering of their battery. He marched at the head of the expedition, just as the Roman eagles were carried before their legions. Many gallant and highminded men, to whom no career was open in the United States, who disdained oppression, and under that generous feeling, probably concealed from themselves dawning ambition, and cupidity fired with the prospect of the Mexican mines, united west of the Sabine. Their avowed object was to aid the patriots to free this oppressed and beautiful country. They chose a highly respected young man of their number, then a captain in the United States Army, their colonel. Their number was small, but of a character to attach importance and confidence to their enterprise. As they advanced into the country their number was increased rapidly by adventurers from the United States. There were many Americans already settled in the country, and they generally placed themselves under the standard of the American volunteers. Many respectable Mexicans joined them. They formally declared the independence of the province of Texas and instituted a temporary government.

Nacogdoches is the first town in the province, in passing from the Sabine toward the interior, and is about

seventy miles from that river. I shall always remember the place, for it has the aspect, though delightfully situated, of being as lonely as an island in the South Sea. Clear and beautiful streams flow from the hills near the town, uniting in a small river just below it. At that time a small body of royal provincial troops was stationed there, and the place contained the usual and necessary accompaniments of a Spanish town, a church, calaboose, commander's house, and about five hundred inhabitants. The American volunteers were received by the inhabitants of this place and vicinity with open arms. The small detachment of royal troops joined them, and a large company of Creoles was formed under the command of Captain Samuel Davenport. Immense herds of cattle filled the valleys of this paradise of shepherds; and supplies of provisions, especially of meat, were easy and abundant.

The body of troops was now swollen to something like the dimensions of an army. They organized a junta for the provisional government, and moved on without opposition, and took possession of Le Bahia. The town stands on the western bank of the San Antonio River, on an elevated site which commands the surrounding country. It contained a fort of stone, with bastions of considerable regularity. A large and massive stone church made one side of the bastion. Its small garrison surrendered to us without opposition, and immediately joined our forces. Our effective force was now considerable, and it was the intention of Bernardo, or, rather of the American commander, to march immediately to the attack of San Antonio, the capital of the province.

Before this could be effected the royal army moved down in force from San Antonio for the attack of La Bahia. It was commanded by Don Simon Herrera and Salcedo,



and was estimated at fifteen hundred men, chiefly mounted Creoles of the province. They had a number of pieces of artillery, which were so badly managed as to be of little utility to them. Our troops took post in a large and uncommonly massive building, which had been erected for the seat of a mission, and was inhabited by some of the converted Indians. It was quite surprising that such a place should have been so long defended against such an imposing force, in possession of so much artillery. But the royal commanders seemed to have been paralyzed. They did not at all want for courage. But they seemed to have been panic stricken with the novel aspect of men, whom they had seen tame, subdued and submissive, and as timid as grasshoppers, all at once, by the new spirit of republicanism, transformed into a fierce, if not a formidable foe. They were evidently suspicious, too, of the fidelity of the provincials that were under them. They were aware that these men would naturally participate in the same spirit with the rest. The siege continued during the whole winter, and was signalized by many sorties and skirmishes, in which the garrison displayed incredible acts of daring and hardihood. The royal commanders attempted to get rid of the garrison by proposing to let them depart in safety. They even offered them a supply of provisions if they would march away to the frontier. But this handful of brave and determined men set all the efforts of the besieging army at defiance.

At length, either alarmed or tired out, the royal troops drew off from the siege without striking a blow. The Americans, without military science and with no other resource than their native gallantry and the internal consciousness of the dignity of freemen, had learned heartily to despise the royal forces and in many instances had shown themselves brave and determined soldiers. Soon

after the retreat of the royal army the patriots were reinforced by a band of Conehatty Indians, and in their turn moved as assailants against the Royalists. At the distance of eight miles from San Antonio the patriots fell in with the royal army, which moved out of town to meet them, having been reinforced by the regular garrison of the town. They entrenched themselves on a rising ground and in an advantageous position behind the river Salado. The patriots, not half their number, formed and rushed to the attack with the most determined fury and with terrible effect. They charged upon the royal battery, carried it, and turned the pieces against the foe. The Spanish royal officers, too, acted with great gallantry, but their troops were completely routed. Major Reuben Ross, of the patriots, and Colonel Montero, of the royal troops, both well mounted, had a personal encounter, single handed in the midst of the battle. Montero was severely wounded and the life of Ross was saved only by the intervention of one of his soldiers, by the name of Owen, who was killed by the blow that saved his commander. Immediately on this defeat the royalists took shelter again in San Antonio.

Such had been the state of things before I arrived at this place. I arrived here in company with Bernardo, and a considerable number of adventurous French, Spanish, Yankees, and people of all nations. I had become acquainted with this extraordinary man in Philadelphia. I imbibed, in common with the rest of my compatriots, something of his confident spirit. The mines glittered in prospective. The hope of emancipating an oppressed people operated as an excitement to more noble feelings. There was a press already in operation, and it was to pour the light of liberty upon that vast and beautiful country.

I was fresh from college, and the visions of Plato's republic flashed across my mind, and I felt all the sanguine anticipations of a youthful legislator and emancipator. Many adventurers joined us from time to time. Bernardo loaned five thousand dollars and I as many hundred, to be repaid on the day in which we should take possession of the mines and mint of Mexico. We moved to the southwest, on the course of the Ohio. Here we endured all that human nature could endure, hunger, want, disaffection among ourselves, and what was to be the most overwhelming consideration of all, the discovery that some of our party were arrant scoundrels who knew nothing about Plato, and cared nothing about freedom; who would steal if they should have a chance, from the mint, but who would never have the courage to seek for the contents in any other way. Our boat was twice frozen up in the river, and we were alternately a spectacle of ridicule and terror to the people among whom we were bound in the ice. Every language was spoken on our floating Babel, and while we talked of subduing and emancipating empires, most of our rogues would have fled from the sight of a sheriff. While we were preparing to legislate for the empire of Montezuma, we were daily quarreling among ourselves and talking flippantly about the mines of Mexico, we wanted shirts and bread. You can easily make a fancy sketch of the events, the anecdotes and the comforts of the communion of such an assortment of apostles of liberty. For my part, I laughed to find myself in such company. I said to myself, the cause cannot be contaminated by the character of those who are with me, nor can my motives be rendered impure by co-operating with the impure motives of others. In due process of time, and with such comfort as we might find in such company, we arrived



where you now find us." Such was the outline of the narrative of my friend.

With the society of these new and pleasant associates, our time flew rapidly and we were again so pleasantly situated as to hear the sentiment of Mt. Mextpal reiterated, that it was good for us to be here, and the wish that no change might alter the present aspect of things. There was one material difference between this place and that. Here we were in an open plain which admitted of no other defence than intrenchments, and could be forced to a battle at the choice of the assailants. The faces of the Misses De Vonpelt were again pale with terror, for we determined, in a council of war, to make an assault upon San Antonio. Flushed by the augmented spirit and numbers of our united forces, we sanguinely calculated upon a successful attack. The royal troops were commanded by the Conde, Salcedo, and Hererra. In a week from the time of our junction we moved up in view of San Antonio.

The royal army came out to meet us and the issue was a pitched battle. Any one can have a surfeit of descriptions of scenes of carnage and blood on any page of history. I do not wish to go into the horrible details of this. It was a severe and fiercely contested struggle, which lasted almost through the day. The Royalists had entrenched themselves, and were defended by a deep ravine. They also had the advantage of us in horse and artillery. Twice we rushed upon their front, and twice we were repelled with great loss. No ways disheartened, the gallant leaders of the Patriots rushed upon them again, and in this third attack, we succeeded in pushing them from the ravine and in crossing it with our whole force. The fight was renewed upon more equal terms, and as it was the charge that would determine the result of the day,

it was the struggle of despair. It was a contest of man with man, and horse with horse. I had the gratification of the first wish of my heart. I met Colonel De Oli, and was as well mounted as he, and he could not escape me. Not having learned the sword exercise, I felt that with the sabre I should not meet him on equal terms. He fired his pitol upon me without effect, and I discharged mine at his horse's breast. The horse reared, and in plunging, dismounted his rider. I instantly dismounted too. I was fortunate enough to turn aside the blow of his sabre and close with him. I threw him to the ground, put my foot on his breast, and, in the fury of the contest, and in the exasperation of my revenge, my first impulse was to cleave his head from his body. Perhaps it was the second thought of a more bitter revenge, but it presented itself to me as the more noble one, to spare him. I wrenched his sabre from him as he held up his powerless arm in the attitude of entreaty. I struck it deep in the ground and by a twist broke it as if it had been a straw and threw the pieces from me. "Spare me," said he, in Spanish, "and I will resign all pretensions to Isabel. She loves you yet." "Poltroon!" I answered, "we have met at last. I ought to wash away the remembrance of your pitiful and malicious persecutions in your blood. But I will show you the difference between a man and a wretch whose blood is too base to stain my sabre. I saved you once from motives of humanity. I now spare you through contempt. I will not owe the favor of Isabel to the circumstance of your resigning it." Saying this, I turned my back upon him. I had gone from him but a few steps when I received from him a shot from a carbine, which passed through my clothes. A truer aim by two inches would have been fatal. He had found the undischarged carbine of a fallen soldier and fired upon me in

his retreat. I turned to pursue him, determined to kill him, but he was already mixed with the solid columns of the foe, and pursuit was in vain. It was a long, weary, and bloody day, but in the end the Royalists retreated and left us an undisputed victory.

Nothing now interposed between us and the town, and we commenced the siege of it with great vigor. On the third day of the siege the town surrendered at discretion and the Royal forces were made prisoners of war. We had now a scene before us of which I had read in history, and which I had seen portrayed by the pencil or the coloring of the poet. It was here before me on a small scale. But all representations were faint, compared with the horrible reality, of the entrance of an army composed of such discordant materials as ours, with so little subordination and so exasperated by the very nature of this kind of warfare, it was only by the greatest exertion, and by making some terrible examples of our own men that we saved the town from the utmost extremes of merciless and wanton cruelty, lust, cupidity, murder and burning that are generally consequent upon such an event. Our Spanish allies were too much inclined to cruelty and to exercise all the dreadful rites of conquest. I felt proud to see how different a spirit was manifested by my own countrymen. The noble young men to whom nature on such occasions assigns the tone and authority of command, were, as it seemed, almost endowed with the attribute of omnipresence. Wherever I went I saw them sheltering the women and children and performing the noblest offices of humanity. Wherever an American went the Spanish women flew to him as to an asylum from their own countrymen.

By the influence of De Vonpelt, with Morelos and Bernardo, to my regiment was assigned the guarding of the palace. Of course the Conde, with his household, fell



under my control as prisoners of war; while Salcedo, the two Hererras, and the other chiefs, were in the keeping of the other American officers. I had never yet been called to a task so extremely irksome and awkward, I might even say, so distressing, as that of introducing myself to the Conde, who had taken shelter in the midst of his household. The carnage had hardly, and with much difficulty, been arrested in the streets when my regiment entered the courtyard of the palace. The servants, many of whom knew me, crowded about me, called me by name, fell on their knees before me and begged me, crossing themselves, to spare them. At the same time they were eloquent in their attempts to flatter me, thanking Our Lady of Guadalupe and all the saints that they had fallen into the hands of so good a man, who they knew would spare the family for the sake of their dear mistress. I sent them away comforted and assured, and asked one of them to lead me to the Conde. His clothes were stained with blood, and the grim sternness of battle was still on his features. Knowing that he was my prisoner, he felt himself safe, and his manner was determined and his bearing indignantly proud. "And is it to you, young man," said he, "that I am to give up my good sword? This is a fall indeed!" At the same time he handed it to me. "Yours," he continued, "at this moment is not exactly the function of a schoolmaster. You have, indeed, come all this distance to confer freedom upon this ignorant people. As yet, I think you have gained little gold except the proper reward of your lessons or the gift of my lady."

I answered him, "Your Excellency can rail at me now as you choose with impunity. You must be aware of my character, and that, being in my power, you are safe. You forget that I once refused gold. For the rest, sir, so situated I should have thought you too much of a

soldier to play off this harmless war of abuse. I cannot accept your sword, and I shall only avail myself of the present streak of fortune, by using her capricious power for the protection of your family. This I would do, even against your will. It would please me much more if, submitting to the chances of fortune as a philosopher, you would let me know how I can be of service to you." I bowed slightly to the father confessor and with a particular expression of indignation and contempt to Don De Oli. Two or three other officers, who had accompanied the Conde to battle as aides, I dismissed as belonging to another portion of our force, and pointed out some arrangements by which the family was to be guarded, in order to avail themselves of my protection. The Condesa and her daughter, with pale countenances, but firm and composed, sat in a recess. I advanced toward them and bowed, waiting for them to address me. Though Doña Isabel affected to be calm, I discovered, by the heaving of her bosom, the painful efforts which this assumed calmness cost her. The Condesa returned my bow, observing that since the cruel result of this unnatural rebellion had cast them into the power of the rebels, she was thankful that it was into my command; that this secured them, she was aware, so far as my protection could extend, from outrage and insult. Doña Isabel added that she too could go so far in thankfulness that my memory, short as it appeared to have been, could not but recur to the past; that while she seemed to be the condescending party, I could not but have known how she had suffered from her father, Colonel De Oli, the father confessor, and others on the charge of an ill-judged partiality for me. These, if mistakes, were the mistakes of gratitude and a desire to discover and countenance merit under a cloud. The case was now reversed. The humble are exalted and the

proud brought low. "But I hope," she continued, "that my father hereafter will more readily believe that the spirit of my father has descended to me. Let him know, and let all know, that I feel very differently towards the triumphant rebel Colonel, although at this moment we are in his power. The man in arms against my king, my father, and my church, though fortune has granted him a momentary triumph, is to me a very different and far less estimable personage than the learned, modest and intrepid youthful instructor. Alas! so young, and yet so unfortunate! You have seen me twice a captive." "To Watook first," I replied, "and now to another and a different kind of savage, is it, Doña Isabel?" She paused a moment for an answer. The first burst of indignant pride had passed. Another current of feeling succeeded. "Oh, no!" she answered. "We are not so unjust. Let me not forget what I owe to the blessed Virgin and to you. How thankful I am to God and the Saints that my dear father and mother have fallen into your hands and not into the power of those miscreants that are associated with you." "I am not less thankful," added her mother. "I can easily imagine how differently this catastrophe would have terminated had we fallen into other hands. At least we are all safe in your keeping; sure of decorous and courteous treatment and of every indulgence which our case will admit."

I moved as if to retire. The Condesa requested me to tarry a moment and, in the presence of her husband and Colonel De Oli, hear a new charge that had been brought against me. "It may seem," said she, "strange for prisoners to bring a youthful conqueror to trial before them. But I am confident that when I hear your reply to the charge it will receive another and a more favorable construction from you. Don De Oli charges you with having



disgracefully beaten him, after he had fallen, and then with having fired upon him after you had had the affected magnanimity to allow him to retire. You may judge his inference, that a man capable of such a base use of power could not be trusted as our keeper." "Have you, sir," cried I, turning to De Oli, "made this courteous report of me? And is it possible that this family could have believed it? I would hardly have undertaken to vindicate myself in the opinion of any one that would listen to such a story. I can hardly bring myself so far to trample on the fallen as to refute so base a falsehood. Were the slanderer in any other place and condition, I would apply to him the epithets he deserves. This falsehood has not even the poor merit of ingenuity and invention. He has only charged upon me the treacherous and cowardly conduct which he practiced himself. Hear the case as it was. All laws, human and divine, would have justified me in putting him to death when the issue of the battle had placed him in my power. Words passed between him and me which are improper to be repeated here. But I sent him away with his life, and I turned my back on him in confidence that for this time at least I was secure from his assault. Scarcely had I turned before I received a shot from him and here," added I, showing the passage of the ball through my clothes, "is the evidence of his marksmanship."

Even the effrontery of Don De Oli seemed to shrink under this refutation. He had always seemed to sustain in the family a character for truth and honor. The father confessor, who had heard him bring the charge against me when they were rejoicing together, that they were my prisoners, called upon him boldly to vindicate himself from this falsehood, or forever forfeit all claims to honor

and veracity. He evidently suffered the tortures of a fiend. He answered, in a faltering voice: "We are all in his power. He can say what he chooses. I have too much regard for the safety of the family to exasperate such a man and bring his persecution and vengeance upon them on my account." "In truth," said I, "Don De Oli, you are well aware on what ground this family would be sure of kindness from me, say or do your worst. For you, sir, before this I at least gave you credit for the virtues of courage and truth. You are below all notice, below all contempt, and if I bore any resentment toward you, the torture and the guilty confessions of your countenance would now evidence all that the deepest revenge could desire." "My dear father," said Isabel, "do you not see all the truth? You heard the charge, and you see the manner with which he receives the refutation. Can it be now that you would wish to unite my fate with that of such a man? Holy Virgin! What have I not escaped? Let me be sacrificed, if such a consummation be necessary; but I implore you, never to think again of uniting me with dishonor." "Daughter," said the Conde, sternly, "desist. I am wretched enough already. You will not drive me mad, I trust, by espousing the cause of rebellion in my presence. This is neither the time nor the place for either the trial or justification of Colonel De Oli. He has at least fought bravely for his king and country. You cannot wish to dishonor the gray hairs of your father by recurring again to the defence and eulogy of our conqueror in his presence." "I perceive," said I, slightly bowing to the Conde, "that my presence is disagreeable, and I will relieve you of it. You shall find me watching to be of service to you, and of this course of things you can say and think as you choose. My business shall be to act for the

preservation of you all, and yours shall be to put your own construction upon my conduct." I stationed Fergus as a sentinel in the yard, who, by his acquaintance with the family, and his native shrewdness, would be able to anticipate their wants and ward off their dangers.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## RESCUED AGAIN.

I SELECTED my headquarters in a house opposite to that where dwelt my prisoners. In the adjoining one were the headquarters of Morelos and Bernardo. De Vonpelt's family were under the same roof with me. After the first tumults of the occupation of the town were over the Americans put themselves seriously to the work of attempting to procure the concurrence of their allies in the **effort** to institute an efficient police and to adopt measures which would restore the march and order and assure protection to all. It was a painful discovery to find that our allies were destitute, to the most humiliating degree, of all subordination and genuine tenderness, and that they indulged their cruelty, cupidity and lust too often without restraint. The town was frequently a scene of riot and brutal excess. All discipline was relaxed and all fear of the reaction of public feeling and the resuscitation of the royal cause was thrown to the winds. Complaints of outrage and violence came to us continually, for the wretched people soon learned that they had little redress to expect from their own countrymen. Morelos would gladly have joined his full influence to ours in redressing these evils. But he found in Bernardo a miserable intriguer, against whose wiles he was obliged to exert all

his circumspection to retain his own command. Bernardo had already begun to raise a Spanish party, hostile to American influence, and denounced Morelos in secret whispers as a friend of the Americans. While our common danger was imminent we had no jars and made common cause. But the moment the surrender of San Antonio had concealed present danger from our view, innumerable heartburnings began to spring up from this source. The unfortunate royalists were only anxious to get under the protection of the Americans. Parties soon ran high and we were in danger of coming to blows with our new friends, the Creole patriots. These disputes soon gave rise to a definite and specific cause for contention which division of the allied troops should have charge of the prisoners. The Spaniards assumed that the Americans pretended only to act as auxiliaries, the ransom of the prisoners, their safe keeping, and their ultimate disposal belonged only to them. In the surrender the prisoners had made it a term that they surrendered to the Americans, and we insisted that our honor was concerned, that they should not be placed out of the reach of our protection. This dispute ran so high that at a fandango at which the American and Spanish officers in general were present, it came to blows. By the aid of their father, two of the American officers, and Fergus, I was able to bring off the Misses Vonpelt safe. Fortunately none of the Conde's family were there. It was a battle royal. The ladies' mantillas were destroyed and the gentlemen's heads were broken, the dirk was liberally used, though, by good fortune, no one was killed. The Misses Vonpelt were excessively alarmed and disgusted, and promised their father that they would follow the example of the Doña Isabel, who had not been seen abroad since the capitulation.

The next day the Spaniards insisted upon having the

possession of the prisoners, and assured us that they would gladly obtain them with our consent, but that otherwise they would have them by force. They were more than quadruple our number and were well able to execute their threats. As things were turning we were but too well assured that in their jealousy of us they would not hesitate on an emergency to join with the royalists and bring their united forces upon us. It was obvious that their jealousy of the Americans preponderated over their attachment to the common cause. In a conclave of the Americans we agreed to met the next day in a council of war and fix upon some final arrangement with respect to the disposal of our prisoners.

On my returning from this meeting I was both pleased and surprised to receive by Fergus a verbal message from the Conde, requesting me, when my leisure would admit to call upon him, for he wished to have a private conversation with me. "Bother them all," said he, "they are like the weathercock, all around the compass. The other day there was nothing like the Colonel De Oli, and I could see they treated yer honor shabbily. Now the thing is all top down. The Conde is blue, Doña Isabel is at the head, and yer honor is in demand. What they want of yer honor I do not know, but they spoke yer name as soft as silk." When I waited on the Conde, I found, as Fergus had said, that the wind had set in another quarter. The Conde received me with complacency, almost with deference. "You are too generous," said he, "and too well versed in human nature not to find an excuse for the roughness of my manner to you the other day. Consider only what I have been, how much I have been chafed by treachery and rebellion on every quarter, and I am confident that all will be forgotten and forgiven. You kindly directed us to let you know in what



manner you could aid us. Now, let me tell you. They propose to place us in the hands of the Spanish chiefs of your party, and if you consent to resign our keeping we are perfectly assured that we pass into their hands only to be massacred. For my own personal interest I should be perfectly content if it were so. But in these dangerous and troublesome times I have earnestly wished to live a little longer for the sake of my lady and daughter. You will insist on retaining your command here with a pertinacity exactly in proportion to the value you fix to our lives." "I entreat you," added the Condesa, "to be pertinacious in retaining your command. We are informed that you alone of the rebels,—pardon me for the word, for I know of no other in its place,—that you alone have a sufficient influence to prevent the adoption of that atrocious resolution. Oh! these dreadful people! You can have no idea of the savageness of their natures. I would rather a thousand times to be in the hands of the Comanches. If you know these people as we do, you would see how little worthy they are of freedom. Notwithstanding all they have done to the contrary, we have all along done ample justice to your character and have felt perfectly tranquil and confident in your keeping."

"Yours is indeed a proud destiny," said Isabel. "At the fandango you carry away in your arms the trembling ladies from the bacchanalian riots and from the dirks of these innocent and amiable patriots. Here you are called to the family of the chief of the government, and they implore you not to hand them over to the dominion of these merciful deliverers of an oppressed people. How much things have changed within a few weeks! How proud must be your feelings in having so many people clinging to you for protection! I cannot flatter myself that my entreaties can add any interest to such a mass of supplication. If

it would, I have, with my parents, a sufficient horror at the canaille of this country. I would beg you, on my bended knee, to strike off our heads with your sabre rather than pass us over into their hands." I answered: "You are not aware, Doña Isabel, of the cruelty of this bitter irony or you would not employ it. I can only say that no part of my deportment to your family has merited it. I have neither time nor inclination to take up the apology of my cause or the people with whom I am associated. They are ignorant and barbarous, I grant you. But what has made them so? Enlighten their ignorance; break their chains; remove the three-fold veil of darkness with which your priesthood has hoodwinked them. My heart tells me that nothing can be more amiable than the Spanish character. To your excellency and the family I can only say that I fear you have entirely miscalculated my influence. But, that such as it is, it shall all be exerted for your welfare. I hope and believe that your alarm is without cause. Should it be otherwise I will retain my command while I can. Whenever you shall be in danger you may calculate to see me at hand. Nothing will debar me from the duty of watching for your safety, but what at the same time deprives me of life." As I was taking my leave the Conde informed me that Don De Oli and the father confessor also begged to be included under my command and subjected to the same disposal with himself. "This, too," I replied, "shall be granted, not for their sakes, but for yours," and I took my leave. In the council of war convened the next morning, the session was stormy and party feelings, as usual, ran high. It appeared, however, that the Spaniards had managed to overreach us and not break with us. They meditated the consummation of their horrid purpose by treachery. They affected to regret that any cause of jealousy should have

existed between us. They proposed an arrangement for the disposal of the chiefs, which they hoped would be mutually satisfactory, and would effectually remove all grounds of jealousy for the future. They represented the immense wealth and resources of the chiefs and they developed intrigues and agencies which, they affirmed, were going on to bring about a counter revolution and that, to those who knew anything of the fickleness of the people, this must be to us ground for distrust and apprehension. They produced a dispatch implicating the honor of the Conde as regarded the terms of his parole, which forbade his holding any intercourse with his government until he should be exchanged. This letter, which we learned after, was a forged one, was addressed to Colonel Arredondo, informing him of the capture of San Antonio by the rebels, and imputing the mistakes by which it was brought about to others; informing him that the rebels were but a miserable, disorderly rabble, and that if he would come to his aid with his single regiment he might recapture the town, rescue him and destroy the rebellion, root and branch, at a single blow.

They represented that there could be no safety for us while men of such powerful influence and so regardless of their obligations were among us. They informed us that an America vessel had arrived at Matagorda from New Orleans, and that they proposed to march the prisoners to that place and there embark them for that city, and there they would be effectually removed from the power of present annoyance and would be safe under the protection of the United States government. Finally, they averred, that the prisoners were desirous of this arrangement. The project seemed so feasible, and the mode of disposing of the prisoners so little objectionable, and the prospect of its restoring amity and a good understanding



among us so delightful, that very little opposition was made to it. The vessel, we knew, had arrived, as stated, and there was no doubt of their good faith. The proposition was adopted almost unanimously. The next question to be disposed of was which should escort them, an American or a Spanish guard. To this the Spanish observed that the Americans, with their usual cautious policy, would certainly refuse to admit prisoners conducted thither by armed Americans, lest they should stand committed with the government. They asserted, too, that it would assume the appearance of our being principals instead of being auxiliaries, as we professed to be. In short, won by such arguments, they easily brought over the Americans to consent to this arrangement also. The council dissolved in great apparent concord, and the articles were carried into immediate execution. The American guard which had hitherto had the keeping of the chiefs, was relieved and a Spanish one substituted in its place. I immediately notified the Conde, by Fergus, of this arrangement, and the necessity which overruled me to consent to it; and requested him to let me know in what manner he could find any further use for my services. I promised still to keep an unobserved eye upon all the movements of their new guard.

Preparations were made for marching the prisoners for Matagorda in the afternoon of the same day. Rumors began to be whispered among the Americans that foul practices were meditated in relation to these chiefs. I imparted my apprehensions for the safety of the Conde's family to a few of my youthful associates whom I knew I could trust. Four of them agreed to concur in any plan which I should propose to follow the family unobserved and aid them to the uttermost if need required. It was a time of leisure and holiday in the camp and hunting par-

ties were projected every day. We made up a party as if for hunting the buffalo. We assumed the costume and painted ourselves after the fashion of the Conehatty Indians, as was the custom for the Americans to do, to make a frolic of the affair. Fergus drove before us in a sumpter cart and we followed on horseback, completely armed and equipped as for the chase. The sub-governor, Salcedo, the two Hererras, and four more of the principal royal officers, were started off on horseback, and, as there was a ford across the river, below the town, they took the direction of the ford, while the carriage of the Conde, which contained the usual members of the family, followed by six servants, all, of course, unarmed, took the direction of a bridge over the river which would lead them two miles from the route which the other party had taken. A strong escort commanded by a fullblooded Wachenango chief surrounded the prisoners on horseback and enclosed them in a hollow square. A lieutenant and six privates followed the coach of the Conde; the pretence was that beyond the bridge the two parties should unite. The moment before we started to get in advance Fergus slipped a billet into my hands containing these words: "We have it from a sure source that we are all to be assassinated. Save us." I recognized and carried to my lips the beautiful and firmly formed handwriting that I knew so well, and I vowed to myself to save her or perish. My associates were young and highspirited men to whom such an adventure wore the highest charm and on whom I knew I might count, even to death. The odds in number would make success only the more glorious and the necessity of making the dash upon the escort more desperate. We cleared ourselves of the town and placed ourselves on horseback in a deep ravine fifty paces from the great road

to the bridge where we knew the carriage and the escort would pass.

We had scarcely reached our station before the escort came in sight riding at the usual speed of carriage-horses on a journey. As the carriage neared us we distinctly heard the guard talking in voices loud and undisguised that they were far enough from the town to execute their purpose and that the ravine was a convenient place in which to dispose of their bodies. Just before the carriage came abreast of us, the lieutenant ordered a halt and dismounted. He opened the door of the carriage and ordered the Conde to come out and prepare to die. At the same time a private seized the arm of the Condesa and dragged her out. The servants approached the carriage, pale with consternation. Two or three pistols were discharged among them and they put spurs to their horses and fled in the direction of the town. At the same moment we rushed from the ravine with a shout, calling upon the servants to stop and aid us. The pistols that had not been fired upon the servants were discharged upon us and one of our party was wounded. I brought down the lieutenant with my yager and we made a rush upon them with our hunting spears. They were so much surprised by this unexpected attack and alarmed at the fall of their leader that they sustained the strife but a moment, leaving one of their number dead and another mortally wounded by a thrust of the spear. The servants, seeing the turn of affairs, rallied and returned, and we remained undisputed masters of the field. We examined the issue of the battle. One of the servants was slightly wounded, one of my associates severely, though not dangerously, and a ball had passed through my clothes and grazed my body just so as to draw blood.

We made ourselves known to the trembling family, for,



seeing us in the costume of Indians, they were scarcely assured that they were not delivered from one danger only to fall into another. "Blessed Virgin!" exclaimed the mother and daughter together; "here is our deliverer again," and the Condesa embraced me, shedding tears of joy. We told them that this was no time for exclamations or acknowledgments, that if they wished to avoid another escort from San Antonio, sent after them on the return of the party that we had defeated, they must make all diligence to fly in the direction of Chihuahua. We requested a place for our wounded companion in the carriage and were compelled to leave the miserable, groaning assassin to his fate. The wounded servant was able to mount on horseback, and we were ready for moving. We requested the Conde not to lose a moment, but to put his horses to their utmost speed across the prairie in the direction of the great road leading to Chihuahua. The coachman, who had fled and concealed himself in the ravine, returned, now that the skirmish was over, and was on his box ready to smack his whip. We proposed that in their flight they should leave our wounded companion at a *meson*, which they would pass, and that we could make arrangements for having him conveyed in a litter to San Antonio. The family cried with one voice that it were better for them to return with me to San Antonio and take their fate than set off unprotected and unarmed on such a journey in which they felt confident they should be overtaken and massacred. "We implore you," said the Condesa and her daughter, in an agony of terror, "not to leave us here, as the night is coming on." I consulted with my associates a moment apart and we unanimously agreed to accompany them that night on their way. We immediately proffered our services as a guard for the night, and even the father confessor raised his solemn

voice in thankful acknowledgment. The Colonel was still seated in the carriage, pale and yellow, grim and silent. We put an end to all questions, exclamations and debates by assuring them that there was not a moment to be lost. For the sake of expedition, we somewhat peremptorily ordered the father confessor to mount the horse of our wounded associate in the carriage and bade the coachman drive away at his swiftest. We started away furiously, our horses at full gallop over the naked plains toward the Chihuahua road.

My reflections, as we sped away, may be imagined. This was the third time that a wondrous combination of events had connected me with the preservation of Doña Isabel. Destiny seemed to have taken the management of bringing into her own hands. Even during her interview with me, after the capture of the town, amidst the seeming haughtiness and irony of her manner, I flattered myself that I saw sufficient indications that I had my former measure of interest in her thoughts. I was very sure that the present occurrence would not lessen it. There could be no mistake in the grateful countenance and glistening eyes with which she had just made her acknowledgments to me. My associates were delighted with the success of our exploit, and were enthusiastic in their admiration of the expressive beauty of Doña Isabel. They spoke in a language which neither the father confessor nor any of the servants but Fergus understood, and amused themselves in imagining ways in which they could become acquainted with her and who should relinquish his claims to the other. When they appealed to me, whose intimacy with her they did not know, I informed them that, according to my calculations of the latitude and longitude of the female heart the wounded knight who sat with her in the carriage would be most likely to carry off her

favor, that in fact, I felt a strong inclination for a share myself, but, I informed them that the favored gentleman reserved by the family for the high distinction was the Spanish cavalier who was also with her in the carriage. The circumstance, which we all remarked, that he had not exerted himself at all in the late rencontre, or even left his seat in the carriage, called forth a burst of indignation that such a swarthy, ill-looking poltroon should carry off such a prize. It was merrily proposed to tumble him out of the carriage and start him with a kick or two toward San Antonio and that the rest of us could decide by single combat whose claims should yield to the others. We all agreed that while we retained our Indian costume and our cheeks were so highly painted with black and vermilion, we should hardly stand higher on the score of personal appearance than the ugly young Spaniard. This remark first reminded us what a horrid and assassin-like figure we made. For in the excitement of the strife we had not been aware that the young lady in question had not seen, in our case, faces exactly like that ascribed to Adonis. At the first stream we dismounted and washed away our paint and threw off our savage costume, which we had put on over our uniforms, and we came out as Æneas in his *début* before Queen Dido, all blooming and likely fellows.

The Father Jerome could not have been much more delighted with the society of a man who had twice saved his life and had received nothing in return but constant enmity and ill offences. Natural reflections of this sort, occasionally expressed by him in Spanish, the interjections of shame and guilty consciousness, came over his mind and audibly expressed themselves. In a deep voice he ejaculated snatches of prayer and thanksgiving to his patron saints. He admitted to me that it astonished



him; that Providence was calling him, once and again, to receive deliverance from a heretic; that I ought to consider the influence which he was aware I knew he had made against me in the Conde's family simply as a holy and conscientious sacrifice which he made of his feelings and gratitude to the paramount claims of religion, and he hoped my enlargement of mind, as he was pleased to say, would find that favorable solution of his conduct. It gratified my pride, however, that heretic as he appeared to regard me, and of course out of the protection of his saints, he seemed to depend at least as much upon my aid as theirs. Even if I turned my horse from one side of the road to the other, he immediately turned his to follow me. He clung still closer to me than even Fergus. All the rest he eyed with disgust and diffidence. He inquired anxiously of me when I thought of leaving him, and suggested more than once that if I would continue on to Chihuahua he could and would secure for me a reception worthy of the preserver of the Conde; that I could stay as long as I pleased and be at liberty to return to San Antonio when I wished. When he was informed that I calculated to leave them the next morning and still a day's journey from their destination, he intimated, in order to secure my attendance and a safe conduct thither, which seemed to be things connected in his mind, that if we would escort them he would henceforward throw any influence he might possess in the family into my favor.

Toward evening, and on the banks of a little stream, we were compelled by the condition of our horses to stop and to give them time to breathe, drink and feed. We judged that we had left San Antonio thirty miles. The family had not yet recovered from the terrors of their situation or the apprehension of pursuit, and still cast

looks of fear over the prairie to see if there were no horsemen dashing over the plains in pursuit of them. We assisted the mother and the daughter from the carriage and prepared sod seats for them on the cool margin of the stream. The family were now formally introduced to their deliverers, and we had more leisure to receive their grateful compliments upon our behavior in the recent affair. We were instructed by what means they became aware of the fate that was intended for them and which they doubted not had actually befallen the other chiefs. To us it was owing that they were not now inhabitants of the "unknown country," and their bodies mangled and cast into the ravine, the prey of vultures. The Conde expressed his thankfulness and his acknowledgments in the frank and laconic style of a soldier; the Condesa and her daughter with that dignity and grace which were peculiar to them. Colonel De Oli, notwithstanding all his propping of birth, fortune and favor, evidently had a very unpleasant remembrance of recent events and showed in various ways that he felt himself at variance with the whole party. His countenance exhibited a compound of instinctive self-importance, malignity, meanness and present degradation which rendered it a study for a physiognomist. He offered his hand to assist Doña Isabel from the carriage. She denied it to him and gave it to one of my companions. She expressed compassion for our wounded friend while her mother was dressing the wound, and he asserted with great gallantry that in the place which he had occupied and in the sympathy which he had received he was so happy that he had hardly felt his wound and that he would cheerfully purchase the same pleasure again with ten such wounds. Here we were, patriots and royalists, all perfect friends. A cold repast was prepared from provisions laid in by the Conde's steward.

The fragrant *parso* was poured out, and we remarked among ourselves how easy and how rapid the mind passes from the extremes of terror, grief and gloom to cheerfulness and joy. Our American friends, though they could speak neither French nor Spanish, put in all their requisite courtesies. The trace of terror and tears was still visible in the countenance of the Condesa, but I had never seen the same delightful expression in the face of the Doña Isabel but once before. I remarked that I had never before made so delightful a supper in my life, and the reply of the Condesa was a cordial pressure of the hand and a starting tear, which intimated that she felt the contrast of what was with what would have been but for us. I noticed too, that Doña Isabel exerted herself to appear to the greatest advantage before these, my young friends. Vanity whispered that she wished that they would report favorably of her to me, and in fact I saw with great satisfaction that her impression upon them was as it had been originally on me. They manifested the romantic and extravagant admiration natural to their years, and were delighted beyond measure. Even the Conde seemed to relax something from his settled gloom as he looked upon their fair, fresh faces, glowing with health, benevolence and hope. He uttered in broken English a wish that such gallant young men belonged to his cause.

We tarried not a moment beyond what was necessary for the repose of our horses, although I told them I hated to disturb so delightful a supper. A look was passed between the Conde and his lady, and it was intimated to Don De Oli that he had better relieve me by taking my place on horseback and give me his seat in the carriage. A grim look intimated his feelings on the subject, but he had no alternative. The arrangement was so much the more pleasant to me, as I was really fatigued, and it



was a pleasure wholly unexpected. Behold me then, just as the ruddy tinge of the setting sun was fading from the plain, seated quietly on the same seat with Doña Isabel and, in the indistinct light which veiled the expression of inward feelings from ordinary inspection and yet allowed the heart, through the eyes, to say unutterable things. The Conde relapsed into his wonted silence, apparently giving up his mind to gloomy agitation. His lady sympathized in his silence. My wounded companion spoke nothing but English, and Isabel, though she now and then made kind inquiries of him if his wound was painful, in that language, did not avail herself of it for any other purpose. Short sentences which said much in few words, passed between her and me, in Spanish. It is wholly unnecessary to give any of the details of that conversation. We were abundantly satisfied, and it was of that sort which neither bears translating nor telling for the benefit of others. The evening closed over us in profound darkness, and it was well for us that our road lay over a vast plain so smooth and unbroken that the coachman drove on with the same confidence by night as by day. Had the road even been difficult, such was our anxiety for our charge, that we should have urged the hastening on by night as the lesser of two dangers. The Condesa fixed herself in a reclining posture on the cushion, intending if possible to sleep. She advised her daughter to do the same. The difficulty for the latter was to find a place on which to recline. The panels of the coach were hard and the position subjected the person to continued jostling. My shoulder was somewhat softer and steadier and the thick epaulette not unlike a pillow. We had been from our first acquaintance pitifully trammelled in our intercourse. I leave you to imagine how we availed ourselves of this opportunity. Those who were

on horseback were weary beyond conversation. All within the carriage slept, or seemed to sleep. The fatigued horses gradually declined to the pace of a snail. Isabel, too, was still and seemed to sleep for half an hour. She then started and raised her head. I asked her in a whisper if she had alarming dreams. And she answered, by asking in turn if I had a fever, for the palpitations of my heart were so quick and audible as to arouse her from her drowsiness. I have no doubt that her medical science enabled her to discriminate these palpitations from those of incipient fever or the throbbings of patriotism.

Joy has its turn as well as sorrow. I believe poets have represented night as slow and limping in her progress. However that may be, the hours of this night, the most charming in the year, flew. I looked with terror at my watch, as it began to be light enough to discern the position of the hands, to see if indeed it were morning. We admitted that we had neither of us slept a moment. We had fairly talked the night through as we ascertained that the drudging sun had not forgotten his daily business. As if to atone in some measure for intruding upon us he made a glorious rise, rolling an atmosphere of mist from his path and presenting us a most impressive view of the grand summits of the mountains before us, and at the distance of half a league the village on the banks of the river, with its hundred smokes beginning to undulate and find their zigzag course aloft. It was fortified, and belonged to the royalists, and the Conde admitted that in that place he should feel himself safe. He begged us to enter the place with him, for that, though we were nominally patriots, such intrepid and generous young men, as he was pleased to call us, could have nothing in common with the assassins from whom we had rescued them and to whom circumstances had attached us. He as-

sured us of the kind reception that he could procure for us, and promised to send us back with a royal detachment and flag of truce to San Antonio. We thanked him, and declined entering the town. We pointed out that it was better for us, as well as him, that there should be no such palpable demonstrations of our understanding one another as such circumstance would show. This argument was conclusive with him, but not so with his lady and daughter. The countenance of the latter expressed the very sentiment of the patriarch when he wrestled and would not let the venerable stranger go. The carriage stopped at my request. I requested Don De Oli to come up with my horse. The Condesa grasped my hand and for a moment was unable to speak from emotion. "It cannot be," said she, "dear young man, that we part here for the last time. I have always said of you what this last exploit must have proved to the conviction of incredulity itself. Our stars have placed us in the utmost peril again and again only to prove your intrepidity and forgetfulness of self. The same providence that has thus mysteriously brought you to our aid will bring us, in its own way, together again and under happier auspices. At least, I will hope it. I will never forget you." The Conde gave me his hand, and for the first time he evinced the impulse of kindly and grateful feelings. "Would to God!" said he, "noble young man, that you belonged to our king and our church! But that is impossible. *Adios*. May I some time have a chance to show you that I remember what you have done." The priest grasped my hand and uttered *Adios*, in his peculiar deep tone of voice. Thanks were offered to my associates with the greatest energy. The wounded young man had a satisfactory share of sympathy and gratitude. He mounted his horse with



agility and expressed himself quite well, and as we turned our horses' heads, I heard something from Don De Oli, muttered in a voice scarcely audible. It was between a curse and a parting salutation, and we galloped away.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE TIDE TURNED.

WE had a safe return to San Antonio. Extreme fatigue, want of sleep and encountering the jests of my companions, who had contrived to make out how things stood between Doña Isabel and me, were the only unpleasant circumstances of our journey. Every lover has felt how harassing, under such circumstances, is the repetition of such jests until they become stale. As soon as we entered the town we had plenty of matter for discussion of a more serious nature. We had the most incontestable evidence that the chiefs of our party could practice the basest treachery and the most cold blooded assassination. It is true we acquitted Morelos of any participation in this abominable plan. But it was not to be disguised that he was carried along by the current of opinion and compelled to give the sanction of his name to acts which ought to have been equally revolting to his understanding and his heart. We had discovered, even in him, a recent leaning toward counsels, to retaliate on the royalist chiefs the cruelties which they had practiced in the case of Hidalgo and the other patriot chiefs who had fallen into their hands. We regretted bitterly to remember that in all revolutions, in the nature of things, mingle much of this horrible spirit of revenge, blood and murder. We vindicated our own

self-respect on finding ourselves associated in the same cause with men capable of such fiend-like projects by charging them upon the character of human nature and the natural reaction of things when men who have been reared in ignorance, oppression and cruelty gained the ascendancy and become treacherous and bloody tyrants in their turn. We had occasion to take other than an abstract view upon this subject. We were not only associated with men capable of weaving such plans into their cause, but we had counteracted a most important part of their plan. We had rescued from their bloody hands the chief of the royalists and his family and had slain an officer of their party in affecting the rescue. It is true we were disguised as savages. But we had little reason to suppose that these adroit and practiced villains would not understand the true state of the case. Inquiry would be made and we should be found to have been absent. Then again, we concluded, that if they had succeeded in the assassination of the other chiefs, as we had no doubt they had, they would be sufficiently occupied in defending themselves against the sensation and inquiry it must naturally create, to guarantee us from suffering a very severe scrutiny for what we had done. It was my opinion that such a wanton and unnecessary outrage would not have been perpetrated against the known feelings and most pointed remonstrance of the Americans until they had settled the principle to set us at defiance. It was my judgment on our return to camp, instead of allowing them to inquire into our conduct, the Americans ought to unite to a man and, with arms in their hands, insist upon instituting an inquiry into the conduct of our chiefs in this affair. They had practiced upon us the grossest deception, and we had a right to inquire why they had not fulfilled their engagement of honor with us to escort the royalists safely to



Matagorda, as they promised us they would. I insisted that if we allowed this most detestable act to pass without remonstrance or investigation, history would justly represent us as having aided and abetted the act. With myself, I determined that if this outrage was generally approved by the Spaniards, and even winked at by the Americans, I would wash my hands of any further participation in the cause.

When we arrived in camp we found everything in greater uproar than ever. Our worst suspicions were confirmed. The infamous villains who had volunteered as the agents of the patriot chiefs on purpose to massacre the royal commanders had perpetrated their purpose with every trait of cold-blooded cruelty. They shot Governor Salcedo, who resisted them. The six other chiefs they bound and cut their throats and threw their bodies into the ravine. They had the unblushing effrontery to return to the camp, clothed in the dress and wearing the watches, ornaments and insignia of these unfortunate but naturally excellent men, whose only crime was that they had been born and bred the adherents of the Spanish despotism. Our conjectures that we should be recognized as the authors of the escape of the Conde were changed to conviction. The Spaniards, with lowering countenances, pronounced the name of the lieutenant whom we had killed, and pointed us out as we passed through their camp, applying to us the epithet, *Americanos diablos*. The Americans, in their quarters, were conversing together in groups, with the deepest apprehension and alarm on their countenances and the most rancorous mutual suspicions existed between the partisans of the two nations.

Many of the Americans, in the utmost disgust and horror, left the camp and returned to their own country, quite relieved in their minds as to their sympathy with

the oppressed Spaniards. The ease with which we had beaten the royalists in every fair encounter, fostered the hopes of others that they should yet come at their revision in the mines. Others flattered themselves that better counsels would prevail, and that these horrid deeds were only the natural effervescence of slavery, in passing into a state of anarchy and licentiousness. Morelos and Bernardo were each struggling for the ascendancy. De Vonpelt, shocked beyond measure by the late transaction, resigned his command as soon as the news arrived in camp, and shut himself up with his daughters. No words could paint their disgust and terror when I returned to them. Fergus seized me by one arm and they by the other, begging me for the love of God to fly from this horrid country forever and follow the footsteps of those whose faces were already set toward the United States. But for one circumstance I should have consented at once. One of the strongest impulses of our nature still detained me here and gave me patience to watch the signs of the times and wait the issue of events. With this cherished family and one or two like-minded friends, among them was my classmate, I spent the evenings and the days almost confined to the house. We made a compact that if affairs continued to have the same unpromising aspect after ten days we would withdraw and make our way as fast as possible to the United States, and De Vonpelt consented to wait patiently till the end of that time.

Eight of them had passed with us in the most profound retirement, when a crisis occurred which once more united us all in a common feeling of danger. The late massacre had not only disgusted and disheartened the Americans and palsied the noble patriot arm among the Mexicans, but it operated in rousing the slumbering spirit of the royalists to the utmost pitch, not only of exasperation

and fury, but of daring and courage. They were determined that neutral and halfway measures should be renounced. The patriots had set the example of extermination, to which a very considerable party of the royalists had been inclined. At the head of that party was Colonel Arredondo, a warrior of great experience, trained in European contests and uniting strong sense, great cunning and calm, calculating selfishness to the discipline, intrepidity and unshrinking character of a soldier, inured to the scenes of violence and blood. Age, circumstances and perhaps natural character had rendered the Conde timid and vacillating in his plans. Sometimes he inclined to strong, and sometimes to moderate measures. Sometimes he was inclined to be merciful, and sometimes cruel; and these feelings rose or fell with the elevation or depression of his spirits, or with the preponderancy or inefficacy of the counsels of Don De Oli, or the father confessor. He sometimes wilfully acted out his own conceptions, and at other times gave himself up entirely to the leading of these counsellors. Under the excitement created by the late deed of horror, the party of Colonel Arredondo came into complete ascendancy. The Conde's name was still affixed to acts, but the real and efficient command was in him. Strong measures were immediately taken. The interior of Mexico was in the same kind of calm with a volcano after a terrible recent eruption. Royal troops were drawn from all the cities in the interior provinces. The regiment of Cadiz was united with that of Vera Cruz. No officers were commissioned for the king among the provincials but who had given a pledge to their future course by acts of violence and outrage against the patriots.

In ten days from the late massacre we heard that a large body of royal troops were rapidly advancing upon San Antonio and had already passed the Rio Grande. The



patriot chiefs were panic-stricken with this intelligence. So long as the Conde was in command they felt they could play a double game between us and the royalists. They felt a confidence that if any treacherous policy called upon them to sacrifice us they could at any time make their peace with him by going over to his standard. Not so with Colonel Arredondo; with him they could hope but for one of two alternatives—the spear or the rope. They came to us, one after another, exculpating themselves from participation in the late massacre. They proposed a court of investigation and professed themselves willing to subject to military execution the persons who should be found to have originated the project. They implored us to resume our command, offering to give that one of our number whom we should select supreme command. We again held a conclave, and we disagreed among ourselves. But our young men possessed an eagerness to make themselves known in exploit and action and an adventurous spirit of enterprise that courted such an occasion for display and nerved them to perseverance. I was undecided what course to pursue. The good nature of De Vorpelt, won by the seeming repentance of the patriot chiefs and by seeing the manifestation of this spirit of reconciliation, inclined him to resume his command. I followed his example. De Vorpelt, my classmate, who was appointed aide to Bernardo, myself and the Americans generally, were received by the Spaniards with loud acclamations. Bernardo had maneuvered to obtain the supreme command, and Moreles had left the army in disgust, retiring to the City of Mexico in disguise.

Our plans were soon made. We moved out of town, where there were such temptations to riot and relaxation of all discipline as rendered it a place unfit for a camp in such an emergency as ours. We took post at a considerable

distance from town, in the large stone buildings belonging to the Mission. They afforded us an admirable military position. They would yield only to a regular siege and were sufficiently strong to resist anything except heavy battering cannon, which the foe did not have. Wood and water in abundance were near, and it was a fine position to command forage and provisions. I gave my opinion when it was called for, and it was decidedly to intrench our camp here and wait for the enemy. But other counsels prevailed. We had word that Arredondo was coming upon us. The Americans exulted in this intelligence, for they flattered themselves that they should now see some real fighting. All former victories had been won, as they said, with too much ease. We had come to despise our enemy, and the confidence consequent upon this contempt proved our ruin.

Eight miles in advance of the Mission there is a considerable stream, which in winter runs with a full current up to the banks and in summer becomes almost a dry branch. It was now midsummer, and the weather was excessively hot. We crossed this branch which, contrary to the ordinary course of things in the summer, afforded an abundance of pure water. The banks were, as is common to such streams, high, rugged and utterly impassable for cavalry, except by the ford. Immediately beyond this stream the road forks, one branch leading to La Bahia and the coast and the other to the City of Mexico. There was a green plot on the opposite bank, and it was completely sheltered from inspection by a precipitous and wooded hill. Here we took post, and were determined to await the foe, whom we knew to be near. We were sure that we had intercepted all communication of intelligence and that the royal troops would begin to descend the hill in full reach of our muskets before they would discover us. We calcu-

lated to attack them encumbered, as their troops always are, by a vast quantity of baggage, and in the confusion of such an unexpected attack put them to rout and flight. But their experienced commander was not to be caught so. He had his plans, too, and, to our ruin, it proved to be the better. Our scouts reported his troops to be at two miles' distance, then at one, and, in fact, we could now clearly hear the blowing of their bugles and the rolling of their drums. Soon after we saw an officer on horseback, in a splendid uniform, come dashing up to the summit of the hill, not more than fifty yards from us. He rose up in his stirrups and took a glance at our camp. In the twinkling of an eye fifty rifles were discharged at him, but he turned his horse and fled so swiftly that he escaped and carried intelligence of our presence. Our impetuosity was the cause of our first mistake in inducing us to leave our fine position by shade and water on such a burning hot summer's morning. But an impulse of impetuosity operated upon us. Horses and foot mounted the hill. We met a considerable force, chiefly mounted provincials, and in less than fifteen minutes routed them. We commenced a hot pursuit, in which we were fatigued, inflamed with heat and suffering from thirst at the same time.

In about two miles from the first attack we met a second and larger detachment, which the inexperienced Spaniards felt sure was the main army. The Americans comprehended in a moment that both these attacks were feints, intended only to draw us from wood and water to fatigue and harass us down and render us an easy conquest for their fresh troops. Nevertheless we rushed upon the second detachment, and they resisted us for nearly half an hour. Considerable blood was shed, and the resistance seemed to be obstinate. They in their turn retreated. Mere fatigue



and exposure to the heat compelled a short halt and arrested our pursuit. We were ready to expire for want of shade and water, and the Americans wished to wait for the enemy here. My classmate, aide of General Bernardo, was sent to the provincial troops on the left, intimating the command of Bernardo, that we should fall back to our morning position and there await the main body of the enemy, which had been found to be entrenched four miles in advance of us. This command was the wish of the Americans. But the provincial commander, equally ignorant, obstinate and impetuous, sent word back to Bernardo that the Americans might retreat if they chose, but the Spaniards were not used to leaving their business half done, and that they would advance upon the royalists, either to beat them or join their standard, just as the Americans might chose. We saw in a moment the nature of our condition. If we undertook to retreat to our camp the greater part of the provincials would immediately desert to the enemy, and, in all probability, we should be attacked by their united force. We were well informed that the road between us and Arredondo was a burning sand, in which even the men would sink to their ankles. We had a small but fine battery of brass artillery. We were aware that the carriages would sink into the sand. We were suffocating with heat, and, under all these disadvantages, we might possibly beat the enemy, and on the whole it seemed the lesser danger to attempt to do it. We made another unavailing effort to bring the provincial commander to listen to reason, and then marched to the attack. Words would be wanting to describe the fatigue of this march. One horse after another gave out and one cannon after another was left bedded in the sand. Even the horses we rode could hardly wade along. A little past the middle of the afternoon we descended a small eminence and saw fifty

paces in advance of us a wide barricade of green felled trees. We had time to observe no more, and had scarcely caught a glimpse before we were saluted by their artillery, concealed behind the trees, and a murderous discharge of musketry by platoons. Our ranks were literally mowed down, and I was for a moment left alone. The Spaniards recoiled from the first fire, but the Americans rushed upon the foe and formed on their right. We brought up the only two field pieces that had not been left in the sand and sustained the fight on somewhat more equal terms. But we were unable to make any impression upon the royal troops behind their breastworks. They continued to pour their fire upon us with so much precision that it seemed a single discharge, and they swept away our advance like chaff before the wind. With such terrible odds against us we kept up the fight for more than two hours, and had once completely silenced the fire of their battery. In fact, they commenced a retreat, and a company of the royal provincials did retreat as fast as possible nearly to the Rio Grande and there reported that the royalists were completely routed. At the same moment that the royalists were retreating from us, we, worn down with fatigue, sinking with heat and thirst, and more than half of our number slain, commenced a retreat, too, and this was the second time that I had seen two armies retreating from each other. At this critical moment, when a single charge upon them would have gained us the victory, our provincial commander wheeled with his horse and joined the enemy. The battle was decided in a moment. The royalists faced about. Their cavalry wheeled upon our wings and we were in danger of being entirely surrounded. At once everything was confusion. The weary, wounded and foot soldiers were speared on the spot or trampled under foot of the horses. De Vorpelt and myself saved ourselves by the

fleetness of our horses. My classmate was afflicted with fever and ague when he came into the battle. His horse had been tired down; he had fastened him to a tree and had fought on foot. On his retreat he found that his horse had broken away. The enemy was advancing, and he was too much exhausted to fly except on horseback. He would have been speared but for the assistance of a compassionate Spaniard. He spoke Spanish with great fluency and begged the Spaniard to catch his horse for him. The Spaniard advanced, uncoiled the rope always hung about his horse's neck, cast the noose, caught his horse and assisted him to mount. I saw him fleeing, and I made the best of my way, with De Vonpelt and Fergus by my side. We should have been glad of the wings of the wind, for we had the royalists in sight advancing upon us. It was a sickening sight to see so many of our poor fellows fall from their horses, literally unable to sit in the saddle any longer. De Vonpelt was corpulent and old. He was obliged to stop from fatigue. The brave and honest man requested me with tears in his eyes to fly. "Be you a father," said he, "und brother, und all to my tear girls, und tell them where I saw the end of the tamned liperties." He had scarcely given me this charge before we were assailed by three or four provincials. This occurrence called back his courage. The faithful Fergus, who had fled in advance, wheeled and came back to our aid. Fergus fought like a giant, and we drove them back on the main body of the army, killing one of their number; but not until De Vonpelt had been severely wounded by a pistol shot. This wound and the bleeding seemed to furnish him with new vigor. We fled again and met with no more annoyance until we reached San Antonio.

Exaggerated reports of our defeat and ruin had preceded us, with the natural addition that De Vonpelt was mortally



wounded and I was killed. I leave you to imagine the scene of our reception by his daughters. The reality, sad as it was, was so much more tolerable than their expectation, that they were all well prepared to receive their wounded father, and when I assured them that there was no doubt but that he would do well and that all they had to do was to prepare to fly, the idea of escaping from the country was so pleasant to them that they instinctively set themselves to preparing for flight. A counter revolution had commenced in the city with the first news of defeat, and there was almost as much danger in delay from the inhabitants as from the enemy. We were not more than an hour in advance of them. All my American compatriots that were neither wounded, sick nor exhausted, escaped, and among them, as I afterward learned with satisfaction, my classmate, who arrived safely in Louisiana, sick of a fever and destitute of everything, in a most wretched plight, but content and happy to have escaped the spear. I obtained by dint of money, friendship and entreaties—for we were obliged to put every engine in operation—horses and wagon. They were harnessed and a mattress thrown into the wagon, and my wounded associate thrown on the mattress. The daughters fled with me on horseback. The traveling and jolting inflamed De Vonpelt's wound and pained him to agony. He was earnest and eloquent again with me and his daughters to fly and leave him to his fate. They felt as I did on this point, and I assured him that to leave him was a thing not to be thought of, and we should all share his fate, be it what it might. That fate was that we should all be arrested and taken. Twenty horsemen pursued and overtook us within a few miles of the town. Resistance was out of the question; we surrendered, were carried back to town and thrown into the calaboose, where all the prisoners that

had not been speared were secured together. It was a kind of Calcutta Black Hole; we were tortured with heat, thirst and vermin. It was, indeed, a rude receptacle for ladies like the Misses Vonpelt. But in this terrible community of misery, where groans, exclamations and calls for the deliverance of death rung around us on every side, the very excess of our wretchedness inspired these sufferers with the tranquil and tearless indifference of despair. I made an effort to influence the keepers to allow another place for these young ladies. But I either spoke to the deaf or incurred only contempt and ridicule. They entreated me to make no further exertions of this kind, assuring me that nothing should separate them from their father.

In the blindness of their exasperation, the royalists found no place for the exercise of mercy or discrimination. Old and young, guilty or innocent, male or female, the beggar swarming with vermin, or those young ladies clad in the richest dresses, so that they were known to have adhered to the patriot cause, or even to be connected with those who had, were all placed in the same predicament. The blood even now chills in my veins as I remember how the women fell on their knees before me as I was retreating on San Antonio, entreating me with clasped hands not to leave them to the vengeance of the royalists. In the calaboose we learned the fate of the remnant of the retreating patriots that escaped the fatal field of Palos Blancos and the first fury of pursuit. A party of the royal cavalry took a nearer route to the town, anticipating the fugitives, and placing themselves on the banks of the river, where three different roads from the battlefield met, they here spread a net which caught in its meshes every individual, most of whom they speared on the spot. Fifty of them were reserved for more enduring sufferings, and were now in prison with us. I was aware that if the Conde had been here,

with his usual ascendancy in the councils, De Vonpelt's family and myself should have been spared. As it was, there was scarcely a ray of hope that our fate would be delayed until the Conde could intimate his will in respect to our case. It was even doubtful if he now retained influence enough to arrest our fate if he wished to. We only knew that the royalist chiefs were deliberating upon our fate during the first, dreadful night in this place. The fate itself was in the awful suspense of conjecture. We could think of but a single friend who would be disposed to make an effort for us, and that was Fergus; who took a different street in entering the town, and had not been heard from since.

The groans, the ejaculations, the agonizing prayers to the Virgin and to the saints, the ridiculous vows of silver shrines and images to their patron saints, if they would interpose for their escape, the curses of despair, in this stifling place of utter darkness, during this dreadful night, can never be erased from my memory. I considered it a kind of representation of the spirits in the final prison of darkness. I am not now able to analyze my own reflections. I certainly was not above the instinctive love of life, for fear of death. But the cause, it seemed, was irretrievably ruined. Doña Isabel could not henceforward come within the scope of my wildest hopes. Here were beautiful girls, reared like the lily of the valley, who awaited their destiny in tranquillity. All about me was the frantic agony of cowardly despair. I am afraid I shall never be again so resigned to die as I was that night.

Nothing struck me more, this sad night, than the deportment of the daughters of De Vonpelt. At first I mistook their sedateness for the tranquillity of despair. It was the exertion of the noblest fortitude. It was the high principled sensibility of strong minds, called into exer-



cise by the most tender and sacred motives that can swell the human breast. It was filial love, manifesting itself in a holy effort to smooth the path of their father to death. There was to me, in the same predicament with the rest, a thrill of sublime feeling, as I witnessed these beautiful girls, whose faces, in the day of their prosperity, "the winds of heaven had not been permitted to visit too roughly," in the midst of darkness, shrieks and despair, with the prospect of military execution in the morning, for their father, for me, and probably for themselves, still preserving an unalterable tranquillity. They must feel it a privilege, if we might be permitted to die without torture. They seemed to regard it all as nothing. It appeared as if they had shaken hands with life and had relinquished all its prospects without a tear of regret for themselves. All the sympathies of their hearts were for their father and me. Theirs was not the posing exhortations to patience and courage, in heavy and set phrase which most would have uttered on a like occasion. They evinced an elastic tranquillity, which is naturally infectious, and which seemed to say in every word and action, "the bitterness of death is past" for us, and all we think and say is for others. While occasionally an uncontrollable burst of sorrow stifled the voice of the father, they tenderly begged him to be calm, and expressed themselves happy that they were not torn one from another in succession, imposing the penalty of a lingering death upon the survivors, but they were likely, now, all to depart together.

The earliest impressions of religion are those that come to our aid in such emergencies. The daughters remembered the prayers and the rites of their infancy in *Faderland*. They recited those prayers, and, separating ourselves as much as we could from the groaning, frantic rabble about us, they knelt beside their father, and

went through the simple and affecting service of the Saxon Lutheran Church for persons in the last extremity. They sang a hymn, so much the more impressive for its quaint and ancient rhymes, and for their touching and sweet voices, which I had never heard in song before. These prayers and this hymn infused something of their enthusiasm and fortitude into the heart of their father. "Indeed, my sweet girls," said he, "I am right glad, since it must be so, that we are to make this journey all together. My old heart could not stand a moment the thought of leaving you alone, among this tanned peoples."

From their father they turned to me. There was always something touching in their strong German accent, and peculiarity at this time, when the condensed emotions of their hearts gave it a peculiar and thrilling intonation of tenderness. "You have been to us," said Jeannette, "father, brother and friend, all in one. The full expression of our feelings to you at this time cannot be mistaken, for, surely, at this time we may be allowed to say all that is in our hearts. We die, and we wish to die, with our father. But it seems hard, almost mysterious, that so young and so good a man, who has been everything to our father and to us, and who might have escaped, should be brought here to die. It must be a hard case to you, for you love, and are beloved, and yet you alone, of all this frantic multitude, seem to be calm." "Can I," I asked, "who am a man, and who wears the garb of a soldier, and who knew, when I embraced this desperate cause, that it did not promise to be a holiday business, can I shrink from death, when I see women so young, and so beautiful, manifest so much fortitude and resignation to their fate?" Katie mournfully added: "But we love none but our father and you. We have not a being to mourn for us. We are strangers in a strange land, and the name will perish with us. Tell

me, is it selfish or not? There is a kind of dreadful satisfaction to me, that we are all alike involved, and that there will be no wretched survivor after we are laid in the last bed. I would die rather than give pain to my dear father, to my sisters, or to you. Can it be that I am selfish in finding satisfaction in the thought that we are all going together?"

"My tear Jeannette," said the father, "it makes me almost feel in heaven to hear you sing. Pray sing me now that sweet song that you sung one evening when I was low spirited on the mountain." She immediately complied, and just murmured in a wild and plaintive air, in Spanish, the words, of which the following is part of a very exact translation:

*Oh! let the soul its slumbers break,  
'Arouse its senses, and awake,  
To see how soon  
Life, with its glories, glides away,  
'And the stern footsteps of decay  
Come stealing on.*

*'And when we eye the rolling tide,  
'Down which our flowing minutes glide  
Always so fast;  
'Let us the present hour employ,  
'And deem each future dream a joy  
Already past.*

*'Let no vain hopes deceive the mind,  
No happier let us hope to find  
To-morrow, than to-day;  
'Our golden dreams of yore were bright,  
Like them the present shall delight,  
Like them decay.*



While these excellent daughters were thus arming themselves, and evincing that noble passive fortitude which seems the appropriate gift of the best women in such circumstances, the wretched father passed from prayers and tears to gloomy silence. Sometimes all the father would rise within him, and burst forth in irrepressible grief, "My sweet girls," said he, "forgive your silly father for undoing you. Oh! dat pad tay, when I took up for this wicked people, and the tamned liperties. Let the day perish, when I left my good stone house, and brought my daughters among this tamned peoples. They are no more fit for the liperties than wolves. Mein Gott! forgive me for these follies. I have brought ruin on you all, my tear girls, this young man and myself." In this style of self-reproach he continued until he wrought himself into paroxysms. But why go through with the horrors of that dreadful night! The unabating heroism and tenderness of these daughters did not remit, and the father finally became settled in his tranquillity, laid himself down on his straw, and soon fell into a profound slumber. The girls retired into a corner by themselves, undoubtedly to hold communion with death and with God, before whom they expected so soon to appear.

If I had been disposed to look on my fate with dismay I could not but have caught something of their tenderness and elevation of heart. I retired too, and the prayers that came spontaneous to my lips, were those which my good mother used to say to me when she put me in my bed in my infant days. "Our Father, who art in Heaven, thy will be done!" These sublime words were repeated again and again.

When the gleams of the morning began to pour light enough into our dungeon to render "darkness visible," what ghastly faces, what agonized countenances did this

pale and unearthly light exhibit? Here were nearly an hundred people, expecting this morning to exchange time for eternity. Few of them had principle, rational pride, true courage, religion, or the hope of immortality. They clung to life from instinct and appetite, and had no hope beyond life, no motives to fortify them against the fears of death. The morning light, by bringing the prospects of death immediately before them, redoubled the shrieks, ejaculations, and groans, until the very confusion and excess of the misery took away its distinctness and horror. A supply of the coarsest food and some water were put into our dungeon, and we were notified that immediately after taking our food we should be ordered out to receive our sentence.

In half an hour the drums rolled at the door. The keys rattled. The heavy door grated on its hinges, and we were called out, one by one, by an officer, who recited our names from a scroll. A regiment guarded us. De Vonpelt, enfeebled by fever, his wound, and the agony of a broken heart, required the support of his daughters; and it was a sight to go to any heart to see these fair and innocent daughters supporting their father amidst the fierce and pitiless array of a regiment of soldiers to the place of execution. While the two elder daughters each held an arm of their father, the trembling Etta leaned upon mine. One-half of the group were women and children, or persons too old or too young to have been committed by any overt act, and were here on account of their affinity with those who had. The groans and the sobbing were drowned by the rolling of the drum, the shrill notes of the fife, and a dead march played by the full band.

Half a mile from town, in a hollow which descended gently in the manner of an amphitheatre, was the place

of sentence and execution. In fact, in this case they were the same thing. A priest, in his pontifical robes, stood by with a crucifix in one hand, and a burning candle in the other. The name of every person, save two or three was recited, and the persons pronounced guilty of treason, rebellion, and heresy, and were sentenced to immediate execution. They were then called out in the order of the names on the paper. They were allowed but two minutes for confession. A file of soldiers stood ready, and a tall officer, whose swarthy face was almost covered with whiskers, held up his sword as the signal for discharge. A handkerchief was loosely folded over the face of the prisoner. He was led to a central point, ordered to kneel, the sword was raised, the victim removed, and another took his place.

I am as little disposed to relate, as you would be to hear, the horrors of this execution in detail. It was protracted with the tedious minuteness, apparently that we might have a long, full taste of the misery of it. The parties stood directly by me. I know not how it happened, but although I expected in a few minutes to take my turn, I felt a strange curiosity to observe both the feelings of the victims, the moment before they were led away, and their spasms after they had received the discharge. And never, since the days of the guillotine, was there a more thrilling spectacle of the manner in which different persons were affected with the immediate prospects of death. Some uttered a cry and fell, and were lifted up and carried away to receive the shot. Others with more physical and moral self-control, had made a violent effort, and marched to the place in sullen submission. Some were affected by a strong spasm, which appeared to commence in some part of the frame, and to diffuse itself over the whole body. The countenances of some wore the paleness of death. Of



others the whole circulation seemed to have mounted to the head. The effect of the discharges upon us who witnessed it, and who waited for our turn, was equally various. Some gave a shriek. Others a long, deep drawn, and quivering sigh. Jeannette gave a faint groan, grasped her father's arm more closely, held her breath until the discharge, and then cried, "Thank God! one more is delivered from his burden." Upon De Vonpelt every discharge operated with a stimulant effect, and drew out an execration upon the treachery and cowardice that had brought them there. We observed that the females, and those too old and too young to have borne arms, were excepted and reserved. Noticing this the daughters uttered an exclamation of terror, lest their father should be called out, and they left behind. Most of the Spanish prisoners had passed to the priest, and joined with him in some brief rite appertaining to confession. Our names were among the last on the scroll, and we were reserved to witness the manner in which all the rest received the consummation of their fate before we could know ours. I believe we began to have a presentiment from the very manner in which the officers looked upon us, that we should be remanded to the prison.

Toward the close of the execution they called out a fine young man, the handsomest provincial I had seen. I had noticed him frequently before. He had been pointed out to me as being the finest young man in New Spain. He had been an ensign in the royal army; but being a republican he had deserted, and joined the patriots. He was pointed out in all circles as gay, amiable, modest, and gallant, devoted to his friends and a universal favorite with the ladies. His faults were free-thinking and gallantry. He was just the kind of a character to call forth the deepest sympathy in his favor. They called on him





HOW A PATRIOT LOOKS WHEN HE DIES



to confess and prepare for execution. "Away," said he, "with these miserable mummeries! Reserve them for the wretched cowards that in battle leave their standard, and go over to the enemy. Thank God! my mind needs not that kind of support. I am a young man; but I have known how to enjoy myself, and I know how to die." He had a most delightful voice, and sung a stanza of a patriotic ode, in fashion at the time, with thrilling and prodigious effect. When they came for him a general feeling of horror passed over the countenances of the survivors. Even the stern faces of the soldiers, who performed the execution, relaxed to pity, and many a tear rolled down to their mustaches. He took up a little favorite dog that clung to his steps, and passed it to a friend, and as he gave away the dog we witnessed a slight faltering, as of overpowering feeling. But he recovered in a moment, and walked to his place with a countenance not only undaunted, but gay, and with a firm and elastic step. They were preparing the handkerchief as usual. But he calmly waved them off. "I wish," said he, "to gain converts to the patriot cause by showing these people how a patriot looks when he dies. Look you all at the face of a patriot soldier." At the same time he cast a calm and imposing look round on the multitude. He put his right hand over his left breast and requested them to aim at his hand. He waved the other gracefully over his head shouting, "*Viva la Republica!*" But two more were executed. De Vonpelt, his daughters, myself, and five other Americans, the women, two or three old men, and the children, were sent back to prison, to wait, as we were told, further orders in our case. The bodies of those who had been executed were thrown into a gully, promiscuously, and so slightly covered with earth that the wolves and vultures, as I was afterward

informed, removed the earth, and made them their prey.

When we returned to the prison we were not so crowded, and the parties were relieved from the fears of immediate death. But even the absence of the crowd of the preceding night had its horrors. What had become of so many people, but a few hours before so clamorous in their griefs, and sharing with us the sorrows of existence? Mothers had lost sons, wives had lost husbands, and there was more than one young Spanish mother, with her long, swarthy visage, and her intensely black eyes suffused with tears, nursing the babe at her breast, whose father had just been shot down. Words convey but a feeble idea of such a scene. Memory has preserved it in my mind with a painful fidelity. The daughters and the father were still more earnest in their thanksgiving for their deliverance, than they had been in their prayers of preparation.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## FRIENDS INDEED.

A NUMBER of days elapsed in this dreary place without bringing any change or any intelligence of what was going on abroad. My fair companions continued the same noble and affectionate deportment to their father and me as before. They lay down on their mouldy straw, and endured their evils, and ate their miserable food with cheerfulness. When I felt it necessary to recur to the uncertainty of our case, they assured me that they were prepared for either joy or sorrow. A trial now presented itself to them, which appeared to be too heavy for even their fortitude to sustain. The gay and honest hearted Saxon had been free, and rather epicurean in his habits, and had been so long accustomed to the luxuries of the table, and the cleanliness and comforts of an opulent mansion, that his wound, confinement, and miserable food, filth, and vermin, together with the gloom of his prospects, and the agonizing feeling of a father at beholding his daughters in such a condition, strongly affected his health, his countenance grew pale, his habit was feverish, and he pined in remembrance of what had been. "I was prepared," said Jeannette, "to see him fall as a soldier, when I expected to share it with him, but it is too much to see him linger and die in this way, with the sad prospects of surviving



him in this horrible place." The other daughters had their forebodings, too, but neither of them spoke on the subject in the presence of the others. It was only when the father and the other daughters were beyond hearing, that the remaining one relieved the oppression of her heart in consultation with me on this gloomy subject. My own thoughts were of the same sort. I saw he could not long survive this state of things. But I spoke as cheerfully as I could, and bade them hope, assuring them that I was persuaded that something would soon happen to brighten our prospects.

My predictions were soon verified. I had all along indulged the hope that Fergus would not be idle if he lived, and I entertained the hope that he did live. He was well mounted, shrewd, and one of those men who have the faculty of making themselves acceptable with all parties. I had the impression also that I had seen him on the day of the execution with the spectators and royal troops, and wearing the badge of the royalists. I had no doubt of his fidelity, and was satisfied that if it were he, the badge was only assumed to serve me the more effectively. When my hopes from that quarter were almost extinct, and I had begun to think that he was dead, one evening as I was standing by the small grated aperture, by which the little air and light we had, was let in upon us, and while I was attempting to get the last glimpses of the sun sinking behind the hills, I heard a slight noise, or scratching on the outside, and by bringing my face in contact with the grate, I saw a paper on the end of a long reed, and put my fingers through the grate and took it in. To my surprise and joy it was from Fergus, and ran thus: "God bless yer honor! I am here all the time, and would stay more, but I am afraid they will guess what I would be at, bother them! I hope yer honor don't think I am an Orange-

man, for all I wear the king's ribbon. They'll always find Fergus as true as steel. I thought that maybe I could do something for ye at the Conde's. So I turns king's man, and goes there. The Conde is a gentleman after all, for he has tried to get ye and yer friend's family off. But the young Don, and the father, devil burn them, were for shooting ye down like the rest. They are a little afraid of the Americans. I could see that. The most the Conde could do was to have ye brought to Durango, and tried over before him and the rest, but the young Don swears that he will see to the hanging of ye there. 'Two words,' says I, 'my lad, to that bargain.' So they mean to bring ye and the Dutchman to Durango, and hang ye there, devil roast them, and then put ye up on the tower, like dead crows in a corn field, to scare the rest. Never ye fear. There is one in the Conde's family that loves ye better than I. We will have ye off yet, in spite of devil or dobbie."

And in truth, in the evening, we were directed to prepare ourselves to be taken to Durango the next morning to be tried on the charge of rebellion. Accordingly, at an early hour the next morning the drums rolled again at the door and we were taken out and put in a six-horse wagon, and, under the guard of a full company of royal regulars, we were started for Durango. Nothing marked the monotonous sadness of the journey, but the accustomed sweetness, patience and sadness of the young ladies, and the declining health and spirits and the low moanings of the father as the jostling tortured his wound. He and I were pinioned fast, which rendered the journey more intolerable. We had a couple of sub-officers in the wagon with us, another circumstance not at all to have been desired. At night we were removed from the wagon with the most guarded caution, and were placed on straw in the wretched

hotels, to find what sleep we could, devoured by vermin, surrounded by rabble of all sorts, and guarded by soldiers drunk with *argu ardiente*, or *vino mezical*. After a number of weary days and nights so spent, I saw the young ladies reaching their heads from under the canvas, and their eyes were filled with tears. "Yonder," said Jeannette, clasping her hands, "are the mountains of Durango. How often have I looked at their blue heads, when I was free and happy." I, too, aroused myself at this intelligence, and looked abroad. The evening was drawing on. I observed a cloud of dust at a distance, nearing us with great rapidity. Our escort comprehended that there was trouble in the wind, for they immediately prepared themselves for an attack.

In five minutes from the first view of the dust, we discovered a body of cavalry, completely armed and wearing the patriot badge. They shouted "a rescue," in a voice of thunder, and in the next instant the two parties were at blows. Whatever amount of interest we felt in this contest, we had nothing to do but to be spectators, as patient as we might and await the issue. Among the hundred contests of this sort that took place unrecorded during the bloody struggle of the revolution in Mexico, this was one of the fiercest and most hotly contested. The matter was decided by the sabre, and each party appeared to be entirely in earnest. Wounds were given, and heads cloven without mercy. At one moment the ladies shrieked and the royalists seemed to prevail. At the next, a fortunate blow from a patriot sabre inclined the scale of victory toward them. It was the first time I had seen brightness return to Vonpelt's eye since the fatal field of Palos Blancos. Even his despondency was thoroughly aroused, to see the issue of this combat. "Mein Gott," said he, as he saw a successful patriot cut the enemy with his sabre,



“dat vas vell done! dunder und blitzen! give them another, my poy, of the same sort.” The patriots were the more numerous party, and, as was generally the case, fought the fiercest. But the royalists sustained the fight until the small area of the battle ground was slippery with blood and the greater number on both sides were either killed or wounded. The royalists, completely surrounded, at length threw down their arms and called for quarter. The captain of the patriots, accompanied by Fergus, whom I had seen from the first playing his part manfully, came up to us all covered with blood and shook us by the hand, informing us that we were free. The captain of the royalists was slain. The patriot chief informed the next surviving officer that his only object in this affair was our rescue, that, having achieved it, he had nothing further to do with him. He ordered the prisoners to clear themselves, and let him see them so far away as to leave no fear of them annoying us, and that he should then shift for himself. He advised us to fly in the direction which should seem to promise us the best chance of escape.

While the patriot captain was attending to his wounded, and the royalists gathering up theirs, Fergus gave me the particulars of this plan for our rescue. The Conde had so far evinced himself an honest man, that, notwithstanding every effort of his intended son-in-law and the father confessor, he had exerted himself to the utmost to obtain our acquittal and permission for us to depart unmolested to the United States. He urged my character and my interposition for his rescue from the assassins, as good ground for extending this favor to me and my friends. He was overruled in both requests, and had the further mortification to hear himself charged in the court with dereliction of duty and a leaning toward the patriot cause. It was so obvious to himself, and every one else, that he had

no longer any efficient influence in the council that he resigned his command in disgust. A coolness existed between himself and Colonel De Oli and the father confessor on the subject. He took Fergus home with him, and they planned the means of our rescue, as we were coming to Durango according to the order of the council. It was no difficult thing, on an estate like his, containing many thousands of tenants, all personally known to him, to find enough brave and trusty men, and patriots in principle, to form the company that effected our rescue. "But," said Fergus, "yer honor will see that he never showed his finger in the business. The business was all managed on the back stairs. As soon as yer honor and yer friends here are off he will be as sorry for yer escape as the rest. They will send out for ye, and maybe put a price on yer heads, as they have done for others. He will agree to it all, and join in the hue and cry against ye, just as though he were on a buffalo hunt."

Here then we were on an open plain, forty miles from Durango, free indeed, but one of our party wounded, weak, and three ladies to encumber us, and surrounded by danger of pursuit and death on every side. The patriot captain proposed our taking any number of the horses, and any provisions, arms and ammunition that we wished. We consulted with him, as an experienced and trusty adviser, respecting our best course for flight. Between us and the United States were three hundred leagues and the royal army, with scouts and patrols, by whom we could not fail to be intercepted. Besides, the sinking strength of De Vonpelt was entirely unequal to any distant flight. In front of us was a city, strongly garrisoned by royal troops, and our only efficient friend obliged to assume the appearance of an enemy. The patriot commander only waited until we should select the direction of our flight, and

was impatient to be gone. The sun was sinking behind the summit of the mountains, and their shadows already covered us and the scene of battle with a cooling shade. "Let us fly," said Jeannette, "to these mountains. Any direction is better than to remain by this scene of carnage. I have always loved the mountains. They lift their sheltering heads in their unchangeable repose and remind me of the unfailing shelter over the friendless and the unchangeable protection of that Omnipotent Being who formed them. Let us call on the rocks to shelter us. Let us dwell in the dens and caves of the earth, and escape forever from man and these sickening scenes of battle and blood. You shall be our shepherd, and we will be shepherdesses. We will find a soft and mossy couch for my poor father. We will nurse him and cheer him and sing to him; and we will live on fruits and game and water from the spring." All this pastoral counsel was uttered in a tone that partook partly of dismay and the terror of the recent combat and the groans of the dying that still rung in our ears, and partly of a wild, half frantic and assumed gaiety. But on the second thought it struck the captain and us all as the most prudent plan, which, in the present circumstances that could be devised. We hailed Jeannette's rhapsody as the result of inspiration. The younger sisters and the father fell in with the proposal. Fergus declared that he was with us for life or death, and that where we went, if we would allow him, there he would go too. "To the caves of the mountains," was the general voice. The captain gave us counsel and aid. The wagon that had brought us was unloaded of all unnecessary articles. From the slain we were furnished with an ample supply of every kind of arms and ammunition. From the baggage wagon of the royalists, which they had left on the battlefield, provisions, axes, implements and



whatever articles a hasty consideration of our probable wants dictated as requisite, we took. We had six horses to our wagon, and we selected two of the best that were left on the field, and fastened them by the bridle to our wagon. We were most scrupulous on the score of provisions, exhausting the patriots as well as securing all that had been left by the royalists. Fergus mounted the seat as driver, and we disposed of our party amidst sacks of bread, pikes and muskets, somewhat more comfortable than we had come thus far. The patriot captain walked apart with me, and we held a private consultation for a moment. The royalists were already gone with their wounded beyond sight. We tendered solemn and grateful thanks to our intrepid deliverer. He wheeled with his company in one direction. We waited until the measured gallop of their horses was no longer heard over the plain. Then we took a direction at right angles to the road, and the nearest direction to the mountains.

## CHAPTER XX.

## IN THE MOUNTAINS AGAIN.

WE arrived at their base just as the last twilight was fading from the sky. As is usual, where the smooth prairie is continued to the foot of the mountains, we were arrested by a high, perpendicular wall. We groped along its side for some distance, until a narrow opening admitted us under an immense projection, rising like an arched roof, and its summit reaching a hundred feet in advance of its base over the plain. Such shelters are common, and the wild buffaloes, we saw, had found an asylum there before us. It offered us a most welcome shelter for the weary De Vonpelt and his daughters, from a storm that seemed to be approaching. It was barricaded on three sides by impassable heights of rock. At the entrance we placed our wagon as a defence. We unharnessed our horses and took the usual precaution to prevent their escape, and turned them out to their repast on the prairie. Fergus and I put ourselves cheerfully to the operation of wood cutting. Our hoary cavern was soon illumined with a blazing fire. We prepared a couch for the wounded Saxon of the cushions and buffalo robes of the wagon and placed him more at his ease than he had been since the battle. Barrels of bread and provisions furnished us with chairs. We brought forth our cold provisions and excellent *parso*. Fergus

would even add chocolate to our preparations. The gathering tempest of thunder and rain would shield us from pursuit until another day should enable us to find a secure retreat. We were at once most comfortably sheltered from the storm and danger, and the open front of our shelter gave us a full and sublime view of the objects below us, for the moment, by the gleams of lightning. Cheered by the domestic blaze of our fire we sat down to our repast. We could not persuade Fergus to lay aside his duty as a servant and take his place at the table with us. But all his Irish vivacity was visible in his good nature and fresh countenance as he waited upon our table. The contrast of the tempest and the thunder abroad, compared with our late lonesome abode in the calaboose, and our pinioned imprisonment in our wagon, as we journeyed to Durango, thoughts of our destiny after we arrived there, the bloody contest which had effected our deliverance from these dangers, the shelter, the comforts, the smoking chocolate, and the fragrant *parso*, received under these circumstances a zest which nothing else could have given. De Vonpelt ate with an appetite which he had not known for a long time, remarking that he should be content to live here the rest of his days and never give the royalists any more trouble about the "tamned liperties," if they would only let him alone, and leave him to the care of his son and daughters. If we could only find some safe retreat like this in the mountains and never let him see a "tamned Creole" more, he was sure that he should recover and regain his strength and appetite again. To hear their father talk this way brightened the faces of the daughters. They began to chat with their wonted gaiety and to find themes for conversation and amusement in their late adventures, and to descant upon the new character of shepherdesses that they proposed to assume. We began to compare our



situation with our condition upon Mount Mextpal, and the ladies, whom the recent events had inspired with a new dislike of the Creole character, considered it a circumstance in favor of our present condition that we had none of them here. We even took it for a good omen for the future that Providence, on our first approach to the mountains, just as a storm was impending, had furnished such a desirable shelter, as we might at other times have sought whole days without finding. The only circumstance to be regretted was that in the morning we should be obliged to renounce it and seek in the mountains for one more remote from inspection and more easily defended. To our present retreat we could be traced by the marks of our wagon. There was no danger at least for this night. Everything that could would be sheltered while such a storm raged abroad. We agreed that in gratitude for such a great and happy deliverance we ought to waive all apprehensions, cast our fears, as far as we could, to the winds, and place a simple trust in Him who had thus far so graciously and wonderfully delivered us, and who thus called upon us to trust Him for the future. After we had finished our devotions, Fergus and I, with a little direction from the ladies, prepared our rustic but comfortable couches on the abundance of leaves which had drifted under the rocks, by spreading our cloaks and blankets upon them.

With the first gleams of the morning light Fergus and I arose and took a long ramble in the mountains. The sun was bright in the sky and the morning glittering with renovation derived from the copious shower when we returned to the family. They had slept profoundly, and were refreshed, but had become painfully anxious on account of our absence. Our breakfast was as cheerful as our supper had been. The clouds were all dispersed and

the mountains reeked with rolling mist that looked beautiful upon their summits after a great rain. The perfect clearness of the day admonished us that it was now that we ought to be apprehensive of pursuit. I had found a practicable defile for our horses far into the mountains. However reluctantly, we were compelled to leave our wagon here. De Vonpelt felt so much refreshed and better that he thought he was able to ride. We packed part of our baggage on the three spare horses. We secured the provisions and articles that were reserved to be carried up at another time, and Fergus and myself occasionally on foot we began to wind slowly around the spiral line of the defile. De Vonpelt soon complained of pain and fatigue, and shortly after declared himself unable to endure his situation any longer. The daughters dismounted and we placed the father at his ease under the shade of a tree, and left them to fan him and bestow upon him their filial attentions, while Fergus and I went in search of a place which would afford us the three requisites that our case called for—shelter, secrecy and defence.

At an elevation of perhaps twelve hundred feet and at a distance of a league and a half from the base of the mountain, we found a limestone cavern, of narrow entrance, which two persons might be able to defend against a hundred and yet the opening admitted light and air sufficient for habitation and comfort. At the foot was a small table plain, beautifully variegated with herbs and flowers, sheltered by precipitous cliffs, and shaded with fine sycamores, and still further accommodated with a rivulet of pure, cool water, which gushed out in different springs at the foot of the rocks. A full mile of the defile below us, in all its wanderings, was completely under the eye, from the foot of the cavern, so that we could discern the approach of assailants a considerable time before they could reach

us. Parroquets, red birds, mocking birds, nightingales, and a variety of unknown birds of beautiful song and plumage flitted and caroled among the branches of the sycamores. Alpine flowers were associated on the stream with splendid cups of the tropical flowering plants. The capability of the place to supply our wants for a long concealment was still more increased by the circumstance that herds of wild cattle, deer and buffalo, must pass near this cavern in winding their way up and down the mountain.

Fergus held up his hands in astonishment. "Now," said he, "in the name of St. Patrick, this thing is a sure sign that yer honor is under the care of the saints. Where could we find another such a place upon the earth? It seems just made to our hands." In truth, taken all in all, it was a little paradise, hid in the mountains, exactly for our case. The only difficulty was to get our family moved up to it. I left Fergus to cut down the bushes at the entrance and take the rude but necessary steps toward fitting the cave for habitation, while I descended to assist the family to ascend to it. We had left them about half-way between this place and the plain. De Vonpelt had been refreshed by rest and the cool shade. The family mounted their horses again, and we were tediously employed for hours in mounting up to the cavern. The family was as much delighted with the place as we had been. In front of it was range for our horses, and with the little fitting up, for which we had ample means, we should have a commodious mansion in perfect keeping with the sweet little plain in front of it. Fergus had seen enough of the new countries, as he called them, to have learned all the little contrivances of a backwoodsman. We furnished our beds with frames fixed on crotches. We had our permanent table. The Spanish beard or long moss furnished soft and elastic mattresses. The young ladies, with the



cheerfulness and even gaiety of rustic brides fitting up the cabins of their bridegrooms, put their hands to the finishing and arranging the comforts of our new abode. We made their father and them comfortable places for sleeping before night; we proposed a hundred improvements for the morrow, and our thoughts were already expatiating in the natural range from utility to ornament, for the young ladies observed that they intended to be shepherdesses of taste and would have matters within to correspond with so sweet a place without. We had our prayers at the close of the day and our hymn of thankfulness from our fair chaplains. As his daughters assisted De Vonpelt to his clean, fresh moss couch, he said, "Now, mein Gott be t'anked. This is the first place where I have stretched myself at ease since I have been hunting for the tanned liperties."

I have seen and survived the horrors of the different Mexican revolutions, changes almost as fruitful in treachery and unnatural crimes as the revolution in France. I have acted my part in these revolutions. My heart has sickened at the sight of guilt and crime, and I have had my share in the general suffering. A sadly pleasing remembrance remains of the months that I spent with this amiable family in the shelter of the mountains. The storms of nature sometimes raged below us and the more terrible storm of human passions was passing in its wrath over this beautiful land. I bitterly and minutely remember the joys, sufferings and sorrows of this narrow, secluded and amiable circle. But even these sorrows, while they have left a mournful recollection, soothe me in the remembrance. Our communion had a kind of holy serenity. Even our gaiety was marked with a kind of pensiveness. The natural vivacity of the young ladies, changed by the late fearful events, had undergone a com-

plete revolution. Even in the midst of their laughter something remarked that the heart was sad. Most of these conversations have passed away unrecorded and are remembered only by Him who writeth down all things in a book from which they cannot be erased. If you are a lover, as you appear to be, of the simplicity of nature, you will allow me a little more detail while I dwell upon the short and simple annals of a residence, which includes, for that time, the history of people wholly disconnected from the world. They record the sorrows of people who endured them in silence and without repining. Three of them have passed away from the ills of life. On my memory is pictured the sweet spot where they lingered and died. I see their graves at the foot of their favorite sycamore. I can fancy that I hear the winds mustering in the hills above where they sleep, and that I can see the shadows of the passing clouds flitting over their lonely graves.

We had provisions sufficient for a month, and we had plenty of powder and lead. We could take all the meat we needed from the herds of deer and cattle that passed near us. Fergus had removed to our cave all the remainder of our baggage from the foot of the mountains. We had every article of the first necessity. And we had more arrangements in the way of comforts than you imagine with such a limited stock of materials. Still there were some luxuries which use had rendered indispensable. Fergus feared nothing and was obnoxious to no party. He proposed to undertake an expedition to Durango, to procure those articles, and that he might bring us back the history of what was passing in the world from which we had fled. He was not only fearless, but faithful; he saw with instinctive quickness the views of others, and would be on his guard. Of course we could have entire confidence in his management of that part of his commission, which

must be left to his discretion, and full persuasion that he would commit neither himself nor us. He felt himself honored by this entire confidence and undertook his commission with alacrity.

There must be many Robinson Crusoe arrangements, for we had all been so sick of murder and crime, and had been so nearly on the verge of destruction that we determined to remain here until the revolution took on a more decided character, or until we could return to the world with safety, or at least so long as this place would serve us as a retreat. We strengthened our natural defences by placing large square timbers at the entrance so as to admit but one person at a time.

We had plenty of carbines, and taught the young ladies the use of them. I complimented them liberally on their progress, and they answered that the motive was sufficient to render them Amazons. We had our assigned hours for more pleasant pursuits. We wanted books, but we had drawing paper and materials for drawing. We had the most beautiful specimens of flowers to decorate our parlor. The ladies put themselves to the task of learning to transfer their rich hues and graceful forms to the paper. Another part of their time was devoted to religious exercises, and I soon learned to unite my voice with theirs in their beautiful Saxon hymns.

Another part of the time was devoted to conversations, in which the Saxon gave us his adventures and wanderings up to the day when, to use his invariable phrase, he started to hunt after the tanned liperties.

Our table was luxurious. We had meat of course in the greatest abundance and variety. The mountain potato grew plentifully in the terraces of the mountains, and was an excellent vegetable. There were many wild fruits that added variety to our repast. We could well dispense with



sugar, for in almost every hollow tree was a swarm of bees, and our residence flowed with honey, if not with milk. Bread, tea and coffee were the only articles of the first necessity that we could not supply, and we reserved our small stock of wine for the wounded father.

Even the father seemed almost to forget that he had seen better days, and to participate in our increasing cheerfulness.

I felt, I believe, more than the rest, one great, bitter privation, the want of books. To converse with friends is delightful, and it will stand longer than almost anything else. To converse with nature is sublime, but the eye tires in this converse if the mind does not. To converse with God must be the highest, as it is the holiest, enjoyment. Books are the only calm, quiet and untiring companions, that we always meet again with the same pleasure as at first.

To supply the want of these, as well as of the other little articles, we proposed to start Fergus on the proposed trip to Durango. He was to procure bread, the staff of life, and wine, which as he said, was life itself; and tea and coffee for the physical nature, and books, the food of the mind. We formed a variety of schemes for obtaining these articles in safety, and the result was, that he should go to Durango and find a retired residence, making himself as little known as possible; that he should purchase the requisite supply, and transport them on his horse to a convenient distance from the city, and secrete them in a place whence he could convey them all at one load in our wagon to our residence.

We could again say that the time passed both swiftly and pleasantly in this rural and isolated place. The summer, which, in that climate possesses a sky so bright and cloudless, had the fervor of its sun so cooled by the mountain

breeze, as never to render the heat uncomfortable in the shade. We climbed the wild cliffs, and found the dells of the mountains. The ladies often amused themselves with trials of agility and daring, which could easiest scale a precipice, or stand with the firmest head upon the dizzy eminence that looked down upon the dark caverns below.

How often for these amiable and unsophisticated girls, who felt and loved nature to a passion, have I culled the wild flowers and brought forth all my little stock of botanical knowledge, and quoted all my best remembrances of poetry in my own language, where according to my judgment, the most consecrated stores are preserved, a language which they now understood well, and which their enunciation and German accent rendered delightful. Not unfrequently our thoughts, taking their flight from the mountains before us to the Eternal Throne, would dwell in solemn earnestness upon the wisdom, benevolence and immensity of that Omnipotent Being who reared the immense piles in our view and our talk was often of the life to come.

They were beautiful and fascinating girls, and as such they always impressed the beholder. But with them constantly, as I was, and uniformly treated with the confiding tenderness of sisters, I was conscious of feeling for them only the interest and attachment of a brother. I thought of them, when absent, with none of the feverish and tumultuous sensations with which I recalled the memory of another. All my thoughts of them were in keeping with the scene of our residence; as tranquil as the repose of the mountains, as bland as the mountain breeze.

In due process of time Fergus returned, and his return was a day of jubilee. We had a tea party, and our parlor was decked with an extraordinary profusion of flowers; for Fergus had returned safe and sound; had attained all the

objects of his mission, and managed them with the wisdom of a serpent and the innocence of the dove. We had a good store of books, an ample supply of wine, and plenty of tea and coffee; and all that he was unable to bring with him was deposited in a place from whence they could be easily and safely transported in the wagon. One consideration had, unaccountably, escaped all our recollections. We had thought nothing of the essential articles of dress. To me it was an unimportant omission. To the Saxon, who was dainty in these points, it was more important. But to the young ladies, who had never been called to stint the farthest and most expensive range of fancy in the variety and elegance of this article, to be confined, week after week, to the casual dress which they wore when they were captured, I knew enough of female nature to understand how painfully this privation must be felt. They affected to consider it as a trifle, and we talked of fig leaves and the skins of animals for dresses. But I was perfectly aware that they would have felt some of those splendid dresses which they used to wear in Durango no unimportant accession to their comfort.

We observed that Fergus seemed rather reluctant to undo all his budget, and that his countenance bore the mark of painful concealment. Such was his interest for us that little by little it all came out. And such was the terror excited by this full disclosure that, so far from thinking of the oversight in the article of dress, the young ladies were hardly willing that Fergus should incur the exposure of taking the wagon to the place where our articles were hidden to bring them home. The amount of his intelligence was this: The Conde had not only resigned, but was under the suspicion of having abetted the attack on the royal company that escorted us. "What do ye think," said Fergus, "was the first thing that I saw stuck on the



posts and pillars, and at the corners of the streets, when I entered the city? Why, God bless yer honor, just this thing: a reward of five thousand *pesos* for yer honor's head, and the same for that of yer friend, and five hundred for mine. By Holy Saint Patrick! my hair rose on end. But, devil burn them, if I let out a word that I was Fergus himself." He ascertained that the country was in such a state of internal discord, and there were so many commencing rebellions, so many partisan skirmishes, and so many guerilla parties, so many battles and massacres, so much mutual distrust, and so little preponderance of any one party over the others that he thought us perfectly safe while we kept ourselves concealed among the mountains. Every one was too anxious about the safety of his own head to think of earning five thousand *pesos* by taking ours. We inferred, on the whole, that we were in little danger, except from needy and guilty assassins; and unless many of them leagued together, we felt as though we should be able to give a good account of them. Our apprehensions were somewhat quieted by another consideration. The general impression in the city was that in our flight we had made for the United States, and as they had not heard of our arrest, it was supposed that we had succeeded in our escape. In his conversation before the De Vonpelts, all that he pretended to know of the Conde's affairs, was, that he and his family lived in profound retirement and were seldom seen in the city.

When we were in private Fergus admitted that, contrary to my orders, he had been at the palace. "I could not keep," said he, "from going to see the old place again, and, indeed, yer honor, I swore to Isabel, by my mother, the last time I saw her, that I would give her a little bit of information about yer honor whenever I could. So I

made myself known to the servants, and the Conde and his lady, and Isabel, and all came to see me in a private way, and they made much of me, too, that they did. Devil burn them, how they came to think, is more than I can guess; but Dorothy, that ye used to learn grammar, and all the Conde's people beside, knew well where yer honor was, and how we have spent our time, and all about us here. Isabel said but little before the rest of them. Ay, but I saw the jewel alone; and then she asked me such a heap of questions, and shed so many tears, and inquired how we all lived here? And so I told her, 'as thick as three in a bed.' 'Ay!' says she, 'Fergus, I expect so. But it's not the decent thing for young ladies to live together in a cave, and to run about the mountains with a young man. Ye may tell yer master that I think so, too.' Says I, 'God bless yer ladyship! they are as sweet, sober and kind little bodies as ye can find on the earth, as modest as nuns and as pretty as angels.' 'Why, really, Fergus,' says she, 'ye have the gift of gab, and one would think ye were smitten too. The prettier they are the less ought they to behave in this way.' So I sees which way the wind sets, and so I says, 'God love yer ladyship, they pray and sing like nuns, and I dare say, never think a bad thought. And for my master, the girls call him brother, and I am sure he loves them only as dear sisters. But God love yer ladyship, he loves ye after another sort of a fashion, and better, I'll swear than he loves his own eyes.' Upon this she makes up her mouth this way and smiles, and says, 'Do ye think so, Fergus?' 'Indeed I do,' says I, 'for he sometimes stops short and looks toward yer quarter, and he looks big and solemn, this way, and out comes the hard sigh. Ay! yer ladyship, I know what all that means.' And she says, 'Fergus, ye have learned to flatter. Yer master and the young ladies have had too much of that talk about brother

and sisters. Ye can tell them that they are in no danger at all. Persuade them to come away and live with me, and I will answer for them. That will be better and safer, and more decent too, than to live in that cave and wander about with a young man, that, after all, is no brother of theirs.' 'But,' says I, 'yer ladyship, would ye have them leave their poor old lame father?' 'Ay! that, indeed,' says she, 'is a thing I don't know how to manage.' Then, God forgive me, I runs on again to tell her ladyship that I could swear that ye never thought of anybody, except in a brotherly way, but her ladyship, and that I was sure ye loved her better than the light of heaven. And that pleased her, yer honor, and she says a thousand and one kind things about ye, and asked all how yer honor looked and talked, and all that. Still the kindest thing about ye was said last, and the big round pearls stood in her glistening eyes when I was about to come away; and then she says, 'Fergus, swear to me, that ye won't tell him that I have said a word to ye about him. Say nothing about it to anybody.' 'Ay!' says I, 'I am as close as a dead man.' And then she almost showed a heart to kiss me when I came away."

The articles that had been overlooked in Fergus's mission to Durango were soon supplied, and in a way which convinced us at once that we had friends in the city, and that by them, at least, the place and circumstances of our retreat were well known. As we went out of our dwelling a few mornings after Fergus's return, we found a large package labeled in Spanish for the Misses Vonpelt. It happened to be on the day in which Fergus returned with his wagon load of goods from the place where he had concealed them, near Durango. Thus all our wants were supplied at one time, for, on opening the package, it was found to contain every requisite article of a lady's wardrobe for



the three young ladies. In the same package were changes of dress for De Vonpelt and me. This ample and expensive package was the gift of the father of my former pupil, Dorothea, at her request. It evinced, on her part, a considerate generosity, a noble use of opulence, and a kindness of heart, which struck us all with a deep feeling of gratitude. De Vonpelt was delighted with feeling himself once more clad as formerly, and to see his daughters looking as they had in Durango. He rubbed his hands, and exclaimed, "Now, mein Gott, if this is not what I have read in the Pibles, how the prophet was fed by de rafens!" There was a letter in Spanish, along with the package. It informed us that to a few friends the place and circumstances of our retreat were well known; but that we need have no apprehensions from that knowledge, for that those friends would only avail themselves of it to put all others on the wrong track; that it was understood that the things sent us must be indispensable to our comfort, and that it was hoped that we should use them as the giver would have done had situations been reversed. It was remarked that it was wholly unnecessary to inform us how the giver came by this knowledge of our retreat, and all that it concerned us to know, was, that our secret was perfectly safe with them. It was hoped that the times would soon become tranquil and safe; that we should get effectually cured of our patriotic fever, return under a general amnesty, and everything go on as formerly. A few remarks at the close excited in me the deepest sorrow and regret. The young ladies read the letter first, and I saw by the change in their countenances that they had read something which had inflicted the keenest anguish. They handed it to me. In a postscript was the following: "The friends of the Misses Vonpelt have but one opinion about the intercourse between them and their former teacher. They can return with perfect safety to

Durango at any time. As well as for his reputation as for theirs, they are earnestly requested to do so."

As much as I rejoiced in this addition to the comfort of these young lades, so much was I grieved with this cruel intimation at the close of the letter, otherwise so considerate and kind, I tasked all my powers to explain it away and account for their impression, on the ground that some gossiping spy had invisibly pried into our privacies and misrepresented the character of our sentiments and our intercourse. The blow, I saw, had taken effect, and they were struck to the heart. It was past all my skill to heal the wound in the slightest degree. That they could fly from danger to their father and to me, and in avoiding exposure of one kind, subject themselves to pain and exposure, so keenly felt by all modest women, of a different and more appalling kind, seemed to be a thought not to be endured. The more deeply they felt the perfect innocence and simplicity of our intercourse, the more bitterly they felt the cruelty of these suspicions. "There is no way from evil," they said. "The very attempt to fly from one danger only plunges us into a worse. Whatever there may be for you, there is no refuge for me but the grave. Of all the evils that we have yet encountered, calumny is the worst." I urged upon them the necessity of relying upon the inward consciousness of integrity. I clearly discovered their unabated regard for me, and their fondness for the unrestrained frankness and gaiety of our conversations, walks and amusements. Their eyes were opened, and seeing the light in which others, especially ladies of their own age and condition, viewed this intercourse, they began to contemplate it with shame and fear for themselves. The charm of their walks and conversations, the confiding *naïveté* of sisters in their whole relation with me were laid aside. There was now restraint, distance and painful blushes

where there had formerly been nothing but the unsuspecting confidence of man before the fall.

Fergus had unknowingly inflicted another wound, for he had carelessly given them to understand that in his trip to Durango he had been at the palace, and they had finally drawn from him all the conversation with Isabel. They saw that she was impressed upon this subject in the same manner as Dorothea. They had always regarded her as a model, her opinions upon all subjects as oracular and her decisions as merciful and just. "So, then," they said, "if we survive danger, we can never hope to survive shame." "Why not, then," I cheerfully asked, "why not remain here as long as we live? We know that we are innocent. We can here appeal to God and our consciences, and so long as we are all satisfied with one another why need we regard what the world says?" To all this they replied by asking if it were not better to follow the advice and return to Durango? "Mein Gott!" cried the father in an agony. "Yes, go, if you wish to part from your old lame father forever. But I hope you will have the goodness to get this young man to strike off my head with his sabre first. He is a good young man, I grant you, and innocent of all the tanned lies that these gossiping girls talk about you. But he will not be hurt with me for saying that he can never be to me in place of my tear girls." This statement was conclusive and final, and they never again resumed the subject of leaving their father.

The father's wound, with the coming of autumn, and with the visible chagrin and increasing silence and dejection of the daughters, grew worse. Hitherto he had regularly hobbled his two or three turns, morning and evening, across the little plain. When fatigued he sat down on a bench, with its mossed cushion, purposely prepared for his repose under the sycamore, and appeared to enjoy our



promenade, as we gaily tripped back and forth. All at once he complained of the excessive fatigue of this exertion, and was only lifted to the door to see us walk, and to contemplate the rising and the setting sun. Fergus would take him in his arms and carry him about, handling him as tenderly as a child. We all redoubled our exertions. The daughters, at my suggestion, not only suppressed every appearance of dejection, but assumed a painful and constrained gaiety.

It was but too evident that these deep evils of the heart, coming so together, involved with the decline of their father their own sorrow and decline. Jeannette had always seemed to me the most sensitive of the three. It is impossible to measure the effect of sorrow on different natures by any other scale than actual experience. The buoyant natures of the two younger sank first. The roses on their cheeks faded away. Our charming walks among the mountains, where we talked with flowing heart, contemplated the glorious spirit-stirring scenery, and courted the mountain breeze, the reckless laugh, the exuberant gaiety, that was delightful with the passing trifles, all were gone. When the father took his daily sleep we sometimes repeated the walks and mounted the same heights and contemplated the same scenes as before. But they walked slowly and by themselves, and were restrained and distant in permitting the common courtesies that they used rather to court. A slight fermentation changes the nature of the purest wine. A little change in the mind and circumstances changes what was delightful to a source of pain. When I saw that I was actually a restraint upon them, I told them that they had enough to encounter beside the pain of my presence, and that if they were afraid of me or doubted me or deemed that my presence was doubtful in its influence upon their reputation, I would leave them and seek for

myself a more solitary retreat. "Oh, no!" they said, with one voice, "that would kill us all at one blow. What could we do without you? What need we care what they say of us? All our world is here."

The autumns of this region, especially in the mountains, are inexpressibly delightful. The azure of the sky is charming. The coolness and dryness of the atmosphere removes the languor of summer. We had in the summer often anticipated the coming of autumn with delight. At last the sober autumn, so desired, came. The thousand wild fruits, with which our table was to be decked, were matured. The mellow and impressive operation of autumn upon the mountain scenery was produced. We experienced the invigorating influence of a keen and frosty air by night, which we had hoped would have given such a delightful aspect to the blaze of the domestic fire, that would illumine our cave. Fergus produced the fruits, the smoking coffee, the venison, the *parso*, and he took the feeble Saxon in his arms, like a child, and placed him on a kind of rude but comfortable sofa, made soft with moss, and spread with buffalo robes. But the expected joy would not come. We tried the sweet hymn, but the voices of the daughters sank away, and instead of hearing the prayers and the hymn, we had only silent tears. "Mein Gott," said the father, sobbing to himself, "why will ye cry und preak my heart? Fergus, give me that pottle and that cup. Here is to 'Faderland,' and let us be comfortable." The very effort to take his customary cup of wine showed his weakness, and after a few vain efforts to parry, or to hide the thrusts of nature, and pass them off for drowsiness, he requested to be carried to his bed. The paleness of his daughters seemed to say, "Our father will never share this fire with us again." Two of them, though not so helpless, appeared as deep in their

decline as the father. He never, after that, arose, except to be dressed and managed as an infant, while the indefatigable Fergus beat up and prepared his couch.

As the frame of De Vonpelt was thus imperceptibly wasting away, nothing on our part was spared to rekindle his hopes or soothe his decline, which friendship or filial tenderness could invent or offer. I had been lately more assiduous in my habits of wandering in the mountains, partly with a view of seeking something new, in the way of aliment, to suit the ever varying fancies of a sick man's appetite, partly to throw off the debilitating gloom resulting from breaking off my former active habits, and spending the greater part of my time with the invalid, and partly to indulge in the contemplation of nature in her most imposing features. My excursions, since the sickness of the family, had been short and confined to the immediate vicinity of our retreat. One morning, after I had seen De Vonpelt sink into a refreshing sleep, and his daughters apparently more cheerful than I had seen them for some time, I determined to extend my ramble beyond its accustomed range. I took my gun, and having lighted a trunk of fat pine with fire, whose ruddy flame and smouldering smoke might serve as a distant beacon to guide my returning steps, I sallied out alone, and climbed from crag to crag, along the rugged spur of the Cordilleras until I had extended my walk to a great distance from the cave and saw from my elevation far below me the smoke of my beacon-fire lifting its cylindrical pillars aloft amidst the blue, still atmosphere of the mountains. What a spectacle arrayed itself below me! How pure and elastic the air, which, perhaps, mortal had never breathed before. Far away below me the boundless plain of the prairie slept like the ocean in a calm. Above me towered, pile above pile, those mighty masses which seemed the ancient battle-



ments of heaven. I stood wrapped in profound meditation. My thoughts expanded, my imagination soared even beyond the immense prospect below me. There is an inspiration in mountain scenery at once soothing and elevating, the happiest mixture of poesy and devotion. Amidst this tranquil entrancement of meditation and reverie I was suddenly startled by the report of a musket at a considerable distance above me. The reverberations from a thousand caverns became fainter and fainter, until echo herself seemed exhausted with her own magic mimicry. "Can this," thought I, "have proceeded from the hands of man? Are these sublime and remote solitudes peopled by other exiles, who have, like us, toiled in benevolence for our fellow men and been driven for a refuge to the caverns of the mountains? Or is it the precursor of a volcano, laboring to give vent to those central fires which these ancient mountains have smothered for ages?"

I was suspended in doubt, wonder and astonishment. I determined, however, to make my way in the direction of the report and attempt to unravel the mystery. With great difficulty and not without danger of being precipitated into some of those deep ravines which had been washed out by mountain torrents, I reached the summit of a high peak which commanded an extensive view. At its base, and not more than fifty paces from where I stood, I discovered the mouth of a cavern and a Spanish musket standing by the side of it. While I was surveying this new object of wonder, a man slowly stepped from the cave. He was apparently about forty, brown and swarthy, with untrimmed beard, which was very long, and he was clad in a dress of leather. But there was the dignity of self-estimation and of manly firmness in his manner, and a searching glance with his keen, black eye, which struck me with awe. Reflection taught me in a moment that this

was no ordinary man. He had not yet espied me. He stood for a moment seemingly wrapped in profound and melancholy thought. As he turned his eye toward the spot where I stood he instantly grasped his musket and cried out in a tone of authority, "*Qui en vive?*" "A friend," I answered in the same language. He fixed his eye sternly and steadily upon me, holding his piece in a position for instant use if inspection should afford the occasion for it. "Hold," I cried. "Whoever you are, or whatever may be your motive for seeking this wild asylum, I came not to spy you out, or disturb the solitude of your retreat. My approach to this place was the result of pure accident. As I come with no hostile intent, no disposition to break in upon the sanctity of your refuge, or pry into the mystery with which you have seen fit to surround yourself, there can be no ground of hostility between us." "I took you," said he, "for one of those miserable hirelings of despotism, who, lured by the reward offered for my head, had scented out the haunt of a patriot exile." "I am," I returned, "like you, an exile myself, and like you a price is set on my head. I am an Anglo-American and lately an adherent of Morelos, and in the thickest against the satellites of despotism. You may have heard of the unfortunate battle of Palos Blancos. Defeated in that fatal field, with a sick friend, I am an outlaw, and a tenant of nature in these wild mountains." The musket dropped from his hand as if he had been palsy struck. "A companion of Morelos," cried he, "and an Anglo-American! And now I discover from your accent you are of English origin. I love even the language in which Washington and his great compatriots spoke. That dialect is the consecrated idiom of freedom of independent and noble thinking. The day will come, when over the globe, he who shall speak that language will claim the same exemptions and immunities,

in consequence, which he demanded in the ancient days, who said, 'I am a Roman citizen.' There is an air of candor in your countenance which inspires confidence. Approach!" I descended the peak and approached the mouth of the cavern. "Before you enter this sanctuary of an exile," said he, holding out his hand, "pledge me a soldier's honor and a patriot's faith that you will never reveal the secret of this interview, at least until Mexico is free. My name among men was once of too much import to become even now the theme of a passing tale." I grasped his hand and gave him the most sacred watchword of the patriots. "Ah!" said he, embracing me, "dear is that word. Come in and see the retirement of a patriot soldier." The cavern was deep and gloomy, a perfect contrast to that where dwelt my declining associates, and without even the requisite accommodations for the most hearty soldier. But the tenant had a mind that had converted the stone floor to a couch of down. "You see before you," said he, "a person who was once one of the most distinguished natives of this country, so delightful and so favored of nature. I might have shared in the guilty honors and distinctions of its oppressors. But my heart told me, even from a child, that God and nature intended that this great country should be free. I was one among the first who disdainfully shook our chains in the face of our oppressors. I was among the first to join in the effort to cast them from us. While there was a blow to be struck I was not inactive. After the fall of Hidalgo, the struggle was kept up by successive chiefs, who rallied round the standard of independence, a motley multitude, dependent for subsistence upon their swords. We carried on a wild guerilla warfare. But the superior discipline of the royal troops, and the corruption and unprincipled ignorance of men who had been brutalized in long and effeminate bond-



age, and who, having broken their chains, became wild and unfeeling tyrants in their turn and practised indiscriminate slaughter upon defenceless and unoffending families, and spread horror and dismay in their path, caused our army to dissolve like snow in the sunbeams. Our hopes revived for a moment when Mina came, like a flaming meteor from the north, with a handful of brave and devoted heroes, checked the successful march of oppression. But his brilliant career was cut short, and he was borne down, the victim of treachery and his own valor. After the fall of this great man a few daring spirits still clung to the cause, desperate as it was. We retreated to a fortress apparently impregnable; but were followed, and attacked by overwhelming numbers. My tongue falters even now, in making the humiliating confession, but very few beside myself escaped the carnage of that day. Proscribed an outlaw in the land of my fathers, banished from kindred, and every charity and endearment of life, we had no other resource than to forswear our kind. A price being set upon our heads, we passed from place to place in various disguises, more than once escaping, as it seemed, only by a miracle. I retreated from mountain to mountain, until I buried myself in this cavern. I have been offered any of the guilty honors or places in the gift of Ferdinand VII., if I would abandon the cause of my country. But in the free air of these mountains and in the hearing of the Divine ear, I have sworn an oath on my soul, never to make any compromise with oppression. No, I will give this flesh to the vultures or the wolves and these bones to bleach unburied upon these crags ere I ever return to man until there is some prospect that my country may yet be free." He paused, as it seemed, from irrepressible agitation. I attempted to raise his hopes, and to present brighter views of the cause than he

seemed to entertain. I assured him that in every land, virtuous and free minds not only sympathized with his country, but anticipated, with the confidence of prophecy, her ultimate emancipation, and the period when the sun which now ever sets upon the slaves of Spain in the New World, shall illumine in his glorious path none but freemen.

*"When Chimborazo over earth, air, wave,  
Shall glare with Titan eye, and see no slave."*

I then gave him a brief detail of the melancholy circumstances which detained me in the sick family of De Vonpelt, and recommended to him, in waiting the time to strike for independence again, to seek a temporary asylum in the United States. "No," said he, "I love, I venerate that country; but will never fly from my own. The stranger knoweth not, and cannot know, what I have been obliged to endure in coming here. My heart bleeds at the recollection; no sympathy can avail me. But if you have mistaken the despondency of a father torn from his children, of a husband torn from the bosom of the wife of his youth, for despair of the cause of freedom, you have misinterpreted my feelings. Seven millions of men that inhale such an air, and see such mountains, can never be held in final bondage. The spirit of freedom may be at this moment pressed down as under the incumbent weight of mountains, but the subterranean fires will ultimately burst forth. Let our oppressors beware of the explosion. From what quarter we are to expect redress it is impossible to foresee. But the day must, and will, come. Great God! shall a despotism as icy and as eternal as the snows upon the mountains, forever blast this loveliest of creation? No. The generation that is now rising is tearing off the veil with which despotism and priest craft has hood-

winked them, and are beginning to feel that they are men. While such men still breathe in Mexico as Guerrero, Bravo and Santa Anna, the cause cannot utterly perish." For my part, my heart kindled again at the tone in which he spoke, and in which he gave me the details of various scenes where he had been engaged. Humanity and friendship called back my thoughts to the place from which I came. I described the condition and circumstances of the amiable and suffering family in which I dwelt. The simple narrative of their sufferings proved that this man, apparently of steel and rock, this man who seemed to have no sympathies but with his country, had a heart of the quickest and tenderest sensibility. He lamented bitterly that he could do nothing for them. "It may be," said he, "that they and you will hear from me again. I am well informed of what is passing in that world below us. I am waiting for the moment to rally the friends of independence round her standard once more. If we should ever gain our freedom, they will then see if I am not the friend of the friendless, the deliverer of the oppressed and the hope of such people as those with whom you sojourn." I viewed the singular man who stood before me; awe-struck at his manner and the tone of his voice. "Such are the extraordinary men," thought I, "whom Providence raises up and qualifies for such emergencies." I ventured, indirectly, to ask him his name. "Your curiosity on this point," said he, "does not dishonor me. I doubt not that you are a man of honor, and that I may safely trust you. If this great land should bequeathe a heritage of bondage to the generation to come, I should not desire that my name should reach posterity, and I should choose to live here alone, with my God and my conscience, and that this cavern should be my tomb. But if, as I hope, a more happy destiny awaits it, if hereafter the corrupt and blinding despotism of this period



should be succeeded by a young and virtuous republic, true to its own glory and the sacred principles of liberty, and flourishing in all the arts of peace and humanity, I trust that my name will not be utterly forgotten. You will then remember this interview. You will welcome your proscribed friends to all the succor and protection that Guadeloupe Victoria can bestow. Remember, that he predicted the future happiness and glory of his country." "Victoria!" cried I, "am I then in the presence of that man." He modestly checked me, reminding me that we had both forfeited our names among the stars. He turned the conversation again to the sick and suffering family, to which, I told him, I felt it was time for me to return. When invited to honor that family with his presence, he remarked, that he could bring them nothing but unavailing sympathy, and that it seemed necessary for him to see no more scenes to soften the heart. "Patriots," said he, "in these times must renounce humanity and act as simple intelligences, alike above fear, interest or feeling. If the time should ever arrive when I can wipe away a single tear from the eyes of your distressed friends, then I will come to visit them and you." I turned and left him with profound regret and admiration.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## THREE GRAVES.

*"The clay was moistened, not with water, but with tears."*

As De Vonpelt's strength declined, as his body wasted away until the skin of his once round figure could almost be wrapped about him, his sensibility and the powers of his mind made themselves more conspicuous. Before his girls he always spoke cheerfully, prophesying the return of good times and the chances of their shortly being allowed an unmolested departure for England or the United States. But his innate sincerity always manifested itself through his unwonted shifts at disguise. And the third day of his confinement to his couch, while his girls had retired, I went to his bed at his request, and I saw the tears streaming down his cheeks. "Mein Gott forpit," said he, "that you should wrong me, and think that I am afraid to die, or that I should have the fears of you. But it is a tamned pad world! My girls are as harmless as lambs, and that you well know. But the world will speak against them now. What will they say about them when their poor old fader is gone? Mein Gott, it goes to my heart, to see them droop and look so pale. That would kill me if nothing else. The people are not fit for the tamned liperties, and they will call my girls pad names when my bones moulder.

When I am dead you will tell them that I bid them not cry. You send them off to your country as fast as you can, and the first scoundrel that speaks against them you kill! Mein Saviour, forgive me! But my bones would not rest in their grave if people should speak against my tear girls. Swear that you will do this, and De Vonpelt will die in peace." It will readily be supposed I promised all that he desired.

It was only four days after the father was confined to his couch before Etta, naturally the gayest of the three, was confined to hers also. We moved hers so near her father's cot that even with their faint voices they could commune with each other. And often in the intervals of our nursing and our efforts to cheer them we heard interchanges between them, the low and faint tones, which trembled with all the tenderness of the father and daughter, as they noted to each other the progress of decline, and the color of their thoughts and feelings in view of it. Katie still made efforts to keep from the couch, but the languid eye, though it shed no tears, was the sure index that she also was drooping. Jeannette, by incredible efforts, kept up her exertions, if not her courage and spirits, and was continually walking from couch to couch, like a ministering angel, begging us all to keep up our spirits and trust in the power and mercy of God. Amidst this scene of trial even Fergus's gay face became overcast. I often saw the poor fellow struggle to the utmost to restrain the expression of his feelings, and when it was no longer in his power, go abroad, and give free scope to his tears. My own heart was inexpressibly heavy. I spent hours and days in intense thought upon the nature of their disease, and the possibility of some remedy. I scrambled the mountains anew for mountain herbs, and every sort that Fergus had heard to be salutary, was given in de-



coction. As a last resource, I proposed to go in disguise to Durango. We had no want of money, and I felt sure that I could bring in safety my friend the American doctor. Neither the father nor his daughters would listen a moment to the proposition. The father, and both the sick daughters insisted that they were doing quite well, that they felt their disease to be of such a character that medicines and physicians could do nothing for it, and that time alone could remove their ills. They assured me that if I started away the loneliness alone would kill them, and that they should never see me again; that even if I went, the temptation of the price on my head would be sure to bring death to me, without any other effect on them than involving us all in the same common ruin.

I will not tire you with the details of the decline of the father and his daughters, if I may avoid it. I am aware that, passing as it did under my eye, with my feelings so interested in the family, and in our peculiar circumstances, it may not engross the feelings of others as it did mine. In the middle of December there happened a strong white frost and one of those glorious mornings of a tropical climate in the mountains ensued. The first gleams of the morning sun melted away the hoary crystals where they had fallen. To the mingled notes of a thousand birds were added the distant baying of our dogs, ringing and echoing in the distant forests and hills. The deer, buffalo and every thing that had life uttered its peculiar note of joy. The brilliance of the morning sun illumined the entrance to our cave. The carol of the birds, and a mingled hum of the spirit stirring morning, was heard by the feeble tenants of the couches. "What a beautiful morning!" each exclaimed. To my surprise, both the father and Etta requested that they might be dressed and helped to the seat under the sycamore. Jeannette dressed

her sister, and Fergus the father, and Katie was just able to drag her weary frame to the place. The father, when dressed, aroused himself. "My dear Robert," said he, "Gott knows when I shall feel so strong again. This is too sweet a morning to spend on this weary couch. Help me up to look at the sun once more." Fergus and I lifted him out and placed him on his seat. Etta was loosely dressed in a white muslin mantle. The unusual effort of rising had made a small bright circle of vermilion in the centre of her cheek. But the rest of her face was as white as her robe. We aided her to a place beside her father. Katie leaned against the tree. "Here, set me down," said Ettie, "and let me breathe." As I carefully helped her to her seat, and adjusted her cushion, she smiled and said, "My dear brother, you forget how liable such gallantry is to suspicion, if any one should be here in concealment to see it." The daughter sustained herself and her father by passing her arm about his neck, and their faces had that exultation of feeling and tenderness mingled with the traces of sinking nature which clearly indicated that the mortal was soon to unite itself with the dust, and that the spirits were preparing for their flight. Both were silent for some moments as if lost in the intenseness of thought or feeling.

Etta spoke first, and with a stronger tone of voice than usual. "My dear father," said she, laying her hand on her bosom, "there is that passing here that no words can describe. What a glorious morning and how sweetly those birds sing! They are chanting the praises of Him to whom we are going. Oh! we shall be together there forever; and there is no slander, no wounds, no shedding of blood, no bitterness of heart. Look at the clouds on yonder plain; see how they flit over the green grass. And such is life! How grand and awful are those blue summits

yonder, that soar away toward Heaven. Dear father, whenever I have lately mentioned in our hymns and our prayers the sweet word, 'Faderland,' it was not of the country beyond the seas, where I was born, that I thought, but the good and happy country above these blue summits. There is 'Faderland.' There alone is peace." The father was dissolved in tears. The sisters with difficulty restrained the audible burst of their grief. Fergus turned and walked away, unable to witness the scene longer. I saw that she was faint and that her bosom heaved with a short, laborious respiration. I watched the entranced inspiration of her eye, which was kindled with an enthusiasm and filial tenderness that struck me with awe. At my request she took a little wine, and as she manifested a purpose to speak again, the father looked upon her with entreaty in his blue eyes. "Mein Gott! It is too much. Tear Etta, say no more. You kill me twice to see your eyes sparkle so and hear your voice sound so strange. Let us die and go to heaven together, and say not another word about it." "Dear father," she continued, "but this once, and I will be still. Come here, my good Jeannette. My poor, pale Katie, come here." They both trembled excessively, for they understood her voice and countenance. They came to her and each took a hand. "Be good girls," said she, "neither mourn nor cry. It is not the terrible thing I thought it, to die. I am in no pain nor fear and I am quite happy, and I feel like sinking to a sweet sleep." She slowly raised her finger and pointed to the sky. "Look at that mild, blue firmament. Beyond are God, my Redeemer, and my final home. Lay me beside the spring there, a little below the foot of the tree, where our brother sits to read. Each of you kiss me." They each approached nearer, knelt, and gave her the long, quivering and final kiss of agonizing and parting affection. "And



you, too, my dear brother, there can be no harm now." They inclined their heads, and I knelt and received the pressure of her cold lips. She then said in a faint voice, "Dear, dear father! the last and the sweetest is for you, for we shall sleep together." But it was too late. The affectionate heart of the father, broken with what he had seen, suffered and expected, had ceased to beat. The daughter, with her arm still around his neck, drew one long, deep sigh, and they were both forever free from the burdens of this life.

Never shone there a brighter morning sun than that which threw its radiance on their pale faces. Fergus and I laid them on the grass, without removing the arm of the daughter from its place, and I aided Katie to her couch, and the other sister seated herself by her bed. It was a scene of peculiar sorrow, and I was so confused and troubled that I have but an indistinct remembrance of what followed. According to the dying request of the sister, no tears were shed except by Fergus, and he wept only when abroad. Jeannette walked thoughtfully backward and forward, occasionally looking at the tranquil countenance of her sister, on which the last smile of affection and hope were sealed up, and then on her father, whom we dressed for his last sleep in his full uniform. Fergus dug one grave and I the other, in the spot which Etta had designated with her dying breath. We sought and found blue slate of the mountains from which we obtained slabs and placed in their narrow beds in the form of coffins, reserving one for a covering. All this was not accomplished until the sun had sunk below the tops of the mountains. I then said to Jeannette, "All is ready, my dear sister, for laying the bodies of these our friends in their last bed; are there to be other solemnities before we render dust to dust?" She wished to read the Saxon Lutheran burial

service over the bodies. I brought her the book that contained it. Fergus and Katie knelt on one side of the bodies, and the priestess in this sad solemnity and myself on the other. In a voice of great energy and exertion that seemed to impart calmness and touching sweetness, and which was rendered by the scene and by the suppressed emotion sublimely impressive, and with an eye that often turned from the book to the sky, she read that solemn service. She then sang the hymn that had been so dear to them, in the same language. As this service closed, they knelt a moment in silence. Fergus and I then took the body of the father first and afterward the daughter, and deposited them in the lonely beds prepared for them. The daughters cast one intense look at the loved countenances. We each took a slab and gently laid them over the bodies. They each, according to the pious custom of their country, threw a little earth into each grave, and we heaped up their narrow beds and left them to their final repose.

The shades of evening had closed around us when the solemn duties were finished. Fergus prepared our coffee, and Katie exerted herself to take her customary seat at the table. You can easily imagine that it was a melancholy repast. When it was over, Katie grasped my hand and thanked me for all that I had done for them. She added, "We will not bow you to the earth by witnessing untold sorrow. To you it is owing that they had all the solace and comfort that their case admitted, and that they have been so decently interred. They are now emancipated, and we owe them no duties but those of memory, and those we shall pay but too faithfully. And yet why? How much happier are they than we?"

The inspiration of the evening had, in some sense, passed away in the morning. There was still a strong struggle for self-control. Their countenances showed how unavail-

ing was that struggle, and that nature will have her way. Katie was evidently soon to find rest beside her sister. She thought, and she said so herself; and then added that she felt but a single regret in the thought, and that was that she should leave her sister still more alone. They saw, too, that I was ill, and their apprehensions on this score operated as a powerful motive to restrain the expressions of their feelings. Indeed the sympathy which I had felt with their sorrow, and the unremitting attention I had paid to the sick and the loneliness of heart which I now experienced, had borne heavily upon my health. But I spoke cheerfully and assured them that they need have no apprehensions for me.

Katie became paler every day, but she made it a point to arise occasionally and be dressed. She became more earnest and assiduous in her prayers and religious exercises. When they were finished in the morning, she generally requested her sister and me to each take an arm, and thus aided she was able to take two or three turns across the plain in front of our cave. Of course every turn led us by the graves of her father and sister.

The second time we walked, as we led this pale but interesting shadow, with her muslin robes floating so loosely about her as to seem but the drapery of the tomb, by the sycamore where were the two graves, she saw that we had carved an inscription on the smooth white bark of the tree. She begged us to assist her to the seat on which her father and sister had died, where she could read the inscription. The words which I had carved gave the names and ages of the deceased, with this line, in the English language: "They were lovely in their lives, and in their death they were not divided." She read the inscription again and again. She then turned and pressed my hand, and her eyes filled with tears. "I think," said she, "it is from the



Bible, and I know enough of your language to feel the beauty of it. There is room on this side for another grave. We were equally dear to him, though the heart of Etta broke first. I wish to be laid on this side, and then he will be between us." As she said this, we led her back to the cave.

I spoke to Jeannette about the wish of her father that as soon as he was gone I should assist his children to escape to the United States. The strength of Katie was not sufficient for us to think of making such a journey. But I suggested the propriety of putting a couch into the wagon and sending Fergus with them both to Durango, where Katie would have the advantage of a comfortable house, society, medical aid and better nursing than could be had here. It was proposed to the invalid by us both. She answered promptly, "My dear brother, I am perfectly aware that to have no society but of moping and melancholy girls, and one of them sick, must be a painful and tiresome business to a young man like you. I neither wonder at nor think hard of you for wishing to get rid of us. But for me, and I think I may add for my sister, that it is wholly out of the question. If there are spies upon us, we care little what the world may choose to say about us, that I dare say, my sister does not bestow a second thought upon the subject. I would not regard it even if I expected to return to life, which I surely do not. For the rest, I would not lose the pleasure of walking so long as I am able, beside their graves. Do not name the thing again, my brother, of removing me from this place. Here is my last home."

I have a satisfaction in reflecting that there was nothing that could be procured in these mountains that we did not obtain for her. Fergus displayed his acquirements in the art of the country by noosing a cow and a goat, which we confined and fed for their milk.

During this slow and heavy winter, Fergus went on a second trip to Durango to procure not only a supply of refreshments, but some little opiates and cordials that we thought would at least palliate the watchfulness and weakness of our dear invalid. He returned with the articles in safety. Royalism had, for the present, in the interior provinces, a quiet ascendancy. A number of obnoxious patriots, upon whose heads a price had been fixed, had been brought in and executed. I was in no danger, only because I was supposed to have reached the United States. Of the two families that knew our secret, and interested themselves for us, we only heard that things with them were as usual.

This is probably carrying out with tedious minuteness the details of how we passed the winter, spring and summer. Months passed, and left upon the memory no traces but a general and gloomy recollection of the same sad way of getting along. Katie herself seemed sometimes verging on fretfulness and impatience. She said it was hard to endure the thought of this sad decay, and longed for the repose of her father and sister. When she expressed these desires to be gone, her sister would sometimes grasp her hand and entreat her to live for her sake. "Look you here," she would reply, holding up her skeleton arm, "and see, dearest Jeannette, if I could live, even if I wished it."

The last walk we aided her to take she was impressed with a sentiment that it would be her last, and it was the most cheerful promenade that we had taken for some time. To us she seemed better. She stooped to admire the freshness of the flowers that we had planted over the graves of her father and sister, which were now in full bloom. She remarked upon the delightfulness of the morning, the freshness of the air, and what a glorious and happy world this would be if we could always see such

scenery, breath such air, have the exercise of perfect health, and have our friends always with us, and have perpetually the exultation of feeling that she then felt. She read the inscription on the tree repeatedly, her lips moved, and she looked upwards. She then complained of fatigue, and requested us to aid her to her couch. As soon as she gained it, she remarked, that of all these pleasant walks, this had been the most delightful; and "I perceive," said she, "that you have not been aware that this has been my last."

After we had lain her down and fanned her for a moment, she begged her sister to leave her, and go to the distant part of the cave, adding, that she felt quite comfortable, and that she had something particular to say to me. Fergus arose and went away. "Sit close to me," said she, "dear brother, and listen. I have a great many things to say to you. This is a lonely and melancholy kind of life that you have been leading here for a long time. What would you think if your sick sister, to whom you have been so very kind, should spend her last moments in choosing a wife for you? Pray do not look with so much astonishment, for I am not wild, but I shall speak words to you of the most sober truth. I am sure there can be nothing forbidding in the idea of my dear sister for a wife. Do you know that all this time the girl has loved you? And such a love! It is not the haughty and coarse sentiment of Dorothea, nor the romantic fondness of the beautiful Isabel, but something tenderer and I am sure as pure as that of a sister. She has lived upon this deeply cherished feeling. She would have died with the rest of us but for this. She has had something for which to hope and think. You would be to her as father, brother, and sister. We have all known that she entertained this feeling, and have felt, that instead of loving us the less she has loved us the more. Has she ever betrayed this deep feeling by a word or look



to you?" I answered that I had not dreamed that she entertained a feeling toward me beyond sisterly kindness. "There," said she, "you have Jeannette's character, just that ardor and self-control. Oh! if you knew her but half as well as I do, you could not but love her in return. I requested this conversation that I might make you one request. You need have no fear of frequent teasing in this way. It is my dying request. This dear girl knows nothing of my purpose. The request is, that you shall marry Jeannette. To-morrow she will be alone with you. You know what has been said already. How much more will be said when I am gone. I love you too with a sisterly kindness, but I think it so disinterested that I would not, to save her reputation, or her life, ask you to do this if I did not firmly believe that she will render you happy—happier, I dare say, my dear brother, than even Isabel. The times will change and you will soon be able to leave these mountains with safety and honor. Unless she leaves them as your wife, she will never leave them at all. Here she will spend the sad days of her remaining existence."

She was here so much exhausted that she was obliged to lie down, drawing her breath with that short, rapid and laborious respiration which marks that the organs are performing their functions so much the more rapidly as they are nearer run down. During this interval of exhaustion her sister came to the bed, apparently ignorant of the purpose of her communication with me. We applied all the restoratives which we could command. Jeannette stood over her, feeling her pulse, and struggling to suppress the appearance of alarm, and laboring to treat this as one of her customary fits of faintness. It was half an hour before she revived sufficiently to resume the conversation. We then raised her again, and with a faint

smile she remarked to her sister that she had not quite finished what she had to say to me.

Her sister retired again, and she resumed the conversation. "I had a great many more things to say to you, but I perceive my strength is failing, and I must come to an end. What do you say, my dear brother, to my proposition? I have been settling the great concerns of eternity for months. There is but this single concern on my mind. Satisfy me on this point and I shall sink as in sleep. I could not bear the thought of her returning to the world, to encounter shame and reproach; or of her remaining alone in these mountains, with no other objects to contemplate than the graves of her father and sisters. When I am gone, and you and she are left here alone with no witnesses, no protection but your servant, guilty or innocent, it will be the same in the eyes of the world. Surely you will not embitter my last moments by denying to your sister Katie the last request she will ever make you."

I am not a casuist. I knew not what answer to give at once to comfort the dying and not commit my conscience and my future conduct. It occurred to me to say that she might be mistaken in respect to her sister's feelings, and to admit that I was previously occupied with other sentiments, which I could not immediately conquer, and that it would be injustice to Jeannette to offer her a divided affection. But the progress of her disease saved me from disseminating or prevarication, and her from the agony of a refusal. She passed into that state of feverish exaltation, in which she always found everything according to her wishes. She called her sister with such a strength of voice that she heard her at a considerable distance. Her sister came trembling, or rather flew to the bed. "I have finished with him," said she, "and now, dear Jeannette, I wish to speak to you both." She clasped both our hands in

hers. "Do you remember," said she, "how sweetly tranquil Etta was when she died? Well, I feel equally so. The only earthly concern on my heart is settled as I could wish. I shall be happy with my dear father and Etta, above the stars, and you two will be happy together while on the earth." Saying this, she closed her eyes from exhaustion. We stood by her with awe, almost unmixed with pain, and scarcely grieved at the thought that her affectionate spirit had fled. But she recovered again, so far as to open her eyes, and, with a sweet smile, to press our hands, and then she closed her eyes once more, as in a quiet sleep, we saw that she had ceased to suffer and to breathe.

I pass by the sad details of this funeral, only remarking that it was managed as the former had been only with this difference, that the number of mourners was less. We laid her beside her father, who now reposed between those daughters that were so dear to him when alive. The same priestess prayed and sang as before. All that was necessary to make the inscription on the sycamore appropriate to the three, was the name, the age, and the time of decease of her who was now united with the other two.

The first month after this death was a month of still greater gloom and sadness than we had experienced. The loneliness, of course, was more complete and entire, and our eyes were incessantly turning to the couches from which the sufferers had passed. During this month Fergus was once more dispatched to Durango and made the return in safety. No important changes had occurred in the political world, nor was there any presage of time when I might safely leave the mountains. But this time Fergus brought me a letter in the handwriting which I knew so well. It was as follows:



"SIR:—I have wept over the ruin of the amiable family with whom you fled to the mountains, victims of a sympathy, for which the subjects of it do not thank you. I have a kind of right in what remains of the family, for Jeannette has been my companion and my fixed friend, and she was always very amiable and good. Now that her father and sisters are dead, I feel it a duty due to her, to claim that you either marry her or send the poor, forlorn girl to me. However you may have thought before, you must surely feel now, that she can no longer reside with you as formerly. I will receive, cherish and comfort her, will ask no questions, and will answer for her safety. You cannot mistake your duty, nor my right to this kind of interference. Present my love and condolence, and show her this."

I showed her the letter. I felt that the contents of it were as true as they were important to her. She shed some tears, and blushed deeply, after she had read it. I thought it a good omen. It showed that earthly emotions still held their sway. "I would hope," said she, "that Isabel has written those cold words out of kindness. But I fear that she allowed other feelings to influence her beside simple regard for me. But what she writes is true; we cannot live here together with propriety. I feel it is a hard task, for every friend on earth is now gone but you. I must conform to my hard fate. You have felt, while my poor father was living, that your honor forbade you to escape and leave him helpless, as he was, and his helpless daughters, among these rugged mountains. All these obstacles are now removed. There is food for a long time for me alone. You have taught me to be an Amazon. I can procure subsistence, and I have no fear. I shall never feel lonely, for I shall always feel as if in the

society, and under the protection of my father and sisters. You cannot be more sensible than I am, that you cannot now remain with me. I never, never can return to Durango. We all have our peculiarities, and this is mine. You take your servant and escape to the United States; be a happy man, and think nothing further of me."

I answered: "You cannot surely be serious in proposing to remain here alone. Be assured, that I will never leave you in this place. If you distrust me, or wish to get rid of me, you must fly from me. But, Jeannette, you remember the conversation I held with your sister just before her death. In that conversation she gave me a dying charge, to propose what I am about to propose. I am sure it is impossible to feel more tenderness, respect, deeper or more internal consideration for a woman than I feel for you. I once derided the notion of any other love. But I feel, to my cost, that above and beyond these tender sentiments, which have always led me to consider you as the most amiable and perfect of human beings, there is a sentiment of another sort, without any hope toward another person. I am but too well aware, that, even if we could leave this place with safety, your reputation would be in some sense committed with mine. The world will measure us by the scale of its own depravity, and not by that of your purity. I can make you but one reparation for an unintentional injury. It is beside the question to leave you here alone, let the world say what it will. You cannot compel me to do that. Will you remain with me as my wedded wife? I pledge to you that honor that was never violated, that the first hour, when it can be done with safety for us both, I will have the tie solemnized with all the rites of that church which you shall prefer. And I will strive by my tenderness and fidelity to make you feel as little as may be, the loss of those dear friends who have left you." The

proposal appeared to fall abruptly, and wholly unexpected, on her ear. But she seemed rather overwhelmed than offended. Blushes and paleness of death succeeded each other in her cheeks. She sat down under an excess of agitation. "Leave me," she said, "a few moments, to consider what you have said. Return after an hour and I will give you an answer."



## CHAPTER XXII.

## BOUND FOR THE UNITED STATES.

AT the expiration of the time I returned. She was perfectly calm, and evinced great firmness of manner. "I am sensible, my dear brother," said she, "of the heroism and disinterestedness of this most generous sacrifice which you offer. I may, perhaps, now without shame admit that I love you deeply, sincerely and with all my heart. Who could have seen what I have and do otherwise? But though I may be romantic, I am neither selfish nor weak. I refuse your generous offer, not because I do not feel all the nobleness of your conduct in making it, nor because my own treacherous heart does not incline me to accept it. But I will be as generous as you are, and for that reason I will refuse your offer. I know too well what love means not to know the duty which it imposes. No words upon the subject, if you please. My resolution is taken. I cannot return to Durango. I will confess all. I am not yet firm enough to see you happy with Isabel. But, as the only return I can make you for your noble proposal, we will, if you consent, attempt to escape together to the United States. I will make my way to your parents. You have heard from my father that he had large sums in British funds. I have all the money that my heart could wish. Perhaps," she added, with a sad smile, "I may find

in that country of laws and men, some other brother who may disenchant me and cure the gloom and restore me to myself and humanity. I can listen to no reply to any part of my proposal but the last."

I meditated for a moment, and reflected that the chances of our reaching the frontier multiplied in proportion as death had diminished our numbers. I mentioned the thing to Fergus. The United States has always been the paradise of the Irish. His thoughts had always been that way, and he was in raptures at the proposal. "Now, God Almighty bless yer honor," said he, "ye make my heart stir within me again. And here it has lain all the time I have stayed in this weary place like a lump of lead. Will I go, do ye say? Yes, yer honor, I would cheat or fight my way there, through an army of devils, to get away from this country of blood." I have seldom found much use in turning over my plans to take new views of them when they strive forcibly at first. I informed Jeannette that since she refused me as a husband I would accompany her flight as a brother, and that I felt honored by the choice she had made of my country as a place of refuge, and that, if we were so fortunate as to reach it, I did not doubt that my parents would receive her as a child.

It was a thing of course to be attempted as soon as possible. We all prepared ourselves with Spanish dresses, as little conspicuous as possible. We spoke the language with considerable accuracy. We assumed the badge of the royalists. Our wagon and many of our more cumbrous possessions here we cheerfully left to the next occupant. Such articles as were necessary we packed, and our cavalcade had the usual appearance of a traveling party in that country. The time fixed for our departure was the next morning. The firmness and excitement of Jeannette, which had hitherto so wonderfully sustained her, passed

away on this occasion. The remainder of the day she was sad, silent, and in tears, giving me wrong answers, and often running to execute business most foreign from her apparent intentions. Our arrangements were soon settled. She retired to long private devotions, and I requested her to go early to rest, to be ready to leave with the rising sun. I was myself gloomy and restless through the night. The moment I slept, the honest Saxon and his deceased daughters seemed to be about me, upbraiding me for deserting them. I arose a little after midnight and went abroad. The fair, full moon arose from the boundless fog of the plain, as I have seen the sun rise on the sea, pouring her full and melancholy light upon the hoary cliffs of these ancient mountains. The owls were hooting responses from their hollow trees. The funereal howl of the wolf rung from cliff to cliff, and from cavern to cavern. In the intervals of their howls I heard the low moans of a human voice. At first I doubted my ear. The moans were repeated, and in a manner to leave no doubt of their origin. I went in the direction of the sound. Jeannette, for it was she, arose from her kneeling posture beside the graves. "Forgive me," she said, "the indulgence of the last opportunity I may ever have to visit these graves. I wished not to distress you in the morning with my sorrows, and I desired to finish these sacred duties unwitnessed and alone. What a place to leave these dear and hallowed remains! What a funeral torch is that pale moon! What a monument these everlasting pillars of rock! What a dirge the howl of those wolves in the cabins of the cliffs! Here a poor orphan, with a continent and an ocean between her and the remotest kindred in the land of her birth, is compelled to leave these dear remains to slumber alone. If it be His will, who ordereth all things right, I would gladly return to this spot once more. But if not,



there is as short a passage from these mountains to the celestial mansions, as from any other place. Your spirits, my dear departed friends, I doubt not have found the road to your homes. Farewell, then. Rest in peace." I would have persuaded her to return to her couch, to avoid the gloom of the scene, and the dampness of the night air. But I saw that she intended to pass the remainder of the night there, and that my presence was a restraint upon the expression of her feelings. I left her to commune with the night and these graves, and to utter thoughts intended only for the Divine ear.

It was a cheerful morning to all the world but to the solitary tenants of this cave. A thousand circumstances united to render it an affecting event to us all to leave this place. We were once more putting to sea in the midst of the storm. But the idea of the dangers upon which we were throwing ourselves, was not the circumstance that most impressed us. The cheerful hours I had spent with the dead, the quietness and repose of the place, a thousand blending associations bound me to the spot. So dear was it to me, so many attachments to it had grown up in my heart that, as we were packing and making arrangements to mount our horses, my eyes filled with tears. But I felt it must be so much more affecting and painful to Jeannette that it became me to set her an example of calmness.

Fergus led the van. The dogs raised their joyous cry and preceded us on our way down the mountain. "Now," said I, "dear Jeannette, as a brother, since you have forbidden me the use of a dearer name, I implore you to give me a good omen as we depart, and not go away in sorrow. This place, I know must be dear to you by the tenderest associations. We have had our joys here as well as our sorrows. We have planted flowers on the graves that will continue to bloom when we are away. Perhaps, in safety and honor, we

may one day be allowed to revisit these mountains and remove the dust to a more hallowed rest. It is still at your option to return under my protection as a brother, or with the still dearer name of husband." Saying this, I assisted her to mount her horse, and we took our solitary way after Fergus down the mountain. I was neither disappointed nor sorry when I heard by her audible sobbing that her heart was throwing off its load of oppression in unrestrained weeping.

We made our way down to the plains, determined to travel on the prairies, as far as possible from the accustomed track of men, and if we met with any people disposed to question us, to evade their questions, to excite as little attention as possible, and if we were attacked, should there not be fearful odds against us, to attempt to defeat the assailants. For myself, I was determined not to be taken alive. The first day we traversed the customary grassy plains, and we saw nothing but herds of wild cattle, and one or two solitary Indians, who crossed our path on horseback, and seemed quite as glad to avoid us as we were to avoid them. We had a kind of tent prepared at night for Jeannette; and Fergus and myself slept by a fire, the one at the head and the other at the foot of the tent.

We traveled unquestioned, and without annoyance, some days, until in making a wide circuit among the wooded hills, to avoid Chihuahua, we were encountered by three persons, who hailed us as patriots, but who were unquestionably robbers. They fired upon us and we returned their fire, but at such a distance that we received no other harm than the wounding of one of our horses. In passing the vicinity of towns and villages we thought it most prudent to lay by during the day and travel only by night. A fortunate occurrence saved us from the necessity of further disguise or concealment. We were making a dis-

tant circuit to the left to avoid the town of Coahuila. We were descending an abrupt hill, a little after sunset. Before we were aware we had descended upon a small body of soldiers encamped at the foot of the hill. We motioned Jeannette to remain, and Fergus and I, with as little appearance of concern as we could assume, rode up to them. They saluted us with great courtesy, asking us the news. We assigned as a reason for having none that we had come from a remote distance, and asked the news in return. They informed us that they were marching to Chihuahua, that a great revolution had commenced at Mexico, that Iturbide had been proclaimed emperor, and that all parties in the capital and the more populous provinces had been merged into this new one; that royalists and patriots had coalesced, that the royal commanders had resigned; there was, in fact, at this time, "no king in Israel," and that "every one did what seemed good in his sight"; that all that was necessary was for every one to be able to guard his own, and that they were marching to the south to join the Imperial Army. They added many more details of the same sort. We readily perceived that they were sanguine adventurers, possessing no exact information upon the points about which they affirmed. But their information, at least, went so far as to relieve us from all apprehensions of being arrested as patriots, as the dominant party now called themselves by that name. I was very happy in being thus relieved. It was extremely painful to travel with a young lady used to the former habits of Jeannette in this unpleasant way of concealment. She would now not only be relieved from traveling in the night and from many privations and hardships, but I calculated soon to place her under respectable female protection. I had enough, too, of deserts and a surfeit of solitude. We had been faithfully taught the comforts



of crowded cities, of civilized life and the haunts of men. We got directions for Coahuila, from which we were distant little more than a league, and we determined to spend the night there.

We arrived at the outskirts of the town at nine in the evening. We made many useless inquiries where we might find lodging for the night. There was so much distrust, and people had been so long in the habit of considering strangers as enemies, that we despaired of gaining admission anywhere, and began to regret having left the shelter of the woods. At length I obtained a visit from a nun, who, after carefully inspecting us, and especially Jeannette, whose sweet, melancholy face could not but secure for her a favorable opinion, and, after returning and consulting with her sisterhood, came back and admitted Jeannette to entertainment in the convent for the night. On their recommendation, Fergus and I were admitted to the house of a *curé*, where we were comfortably accommodated. It was the first night that any of us had enjoyed the luxury of a bed for more than two years.

During the night I lay restless on my down, and as many thoughts and reflections passed through my mind as could be crowded into it in so short a time. You may suppose that I had some ties to this country that rendered the thought of leaving it forever, painful. The dangers and hairbreadth escapes which I had experienced in it only bound me to it the more. Some invisible band, the band of destiny, I suppose, still tied my heart to it. I thought much, too, of Jeannette. She wished to fly to my country. My parents had seemed to her desolate heart in place of the friends she had lost. She was beautiful, amiable and accomplished; had strong sense, the most affectionate heart, and the profoundest sensibility. She had an ample fortune, and every new position in which I had seen her had called

forth new virtues and attractions. In every change of condition I had seen developed sweet dispositions, winning manners and the most exalted and generous principles of action. Why could I not love such a woman? What more could I expect on the earth than to return with such a wife to my father's house and enjoy the gifts of Providence and fortune in peace and privacy? It was not vanity that assured me she loved and trusted me and had only rejected my offer because she was aware that the affection was not equal and mutual. Why should I leave her thus doubly forlorn as she would then be? Still further, I discovered in the recesses of my heart, that although something was wanting in my feelings, there was a train of thought connected with her that rendered the idea of parting from her exceedingly painful; and the notion of her loving and uniting herself with another struck me with something of bitterness that I had learned too well to class under the name of jealousy.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## THE PARTING.

MY resolution for the future was made up during the night. It was, to escort her so far on her way to the United States as to put her under proper protection if she chose to stay, or otherwise for her journey to any part of the country she might select. For myself, I resolved to return to the centre of the scene of action, and if, on investigation, I approved the cause, that I would offer myself as a volunteer in the armies of Iturbide. I informed Jeannette, when I met her in the morning, of my resolution. She showed herself prepared for it. She could not restrain her tears, but she added, "My mind has been prepared for this or anything else that can happen. It will be hard to find myself entirely alone in this wide world and to lose such a friend and such a brother. I tremble, too, to leave you in this wild and wicked country. But every one must fill up his destiny. You can have little idea how I shall feel at the thought of leaving you here. I do not complain. I feel that the same tie, were I in your place, would detain me, too." "You know," I answered, "my dear Jeannette, that it is in your power at any moment to arrest my steps and to command my tenderness and my duty to the last hour of my life." "I well understand that, too," she replied. "You no doubt know



why I do not avail myself of a protection so dear to me. I am not going to prove myself ungrateful for all that you have done by repining that you cannot do more. I remember it all. And my pride, for I have plenty of it, little as you seem to suspect it, is saved by the reflection that my misfortune probably resulted from your having seen Isabel first. My dear brother, I pardon you, that your heart still clings to this country. Would that I were a man! I would go to the wars with you. And no danger should reach you that my powers or life could avert. As it is, I cannot follow your footsteps. There is but one place in this country but what is hateful to me. I will go further; I have not yet strength of mind enough to bear to see you happy with Isabel. But, if you feel that love and honor call you to stay, it shall not be said that you were obliged to tie yourself to the steps of a fond and weak girl. Leave me, then; return and fill up your destiny; and if there be any prevalence in my prayers, you cannot be other than great and happy.

"Thinking over a thousand things last night," she continued, "it occurred to me that you would come to this resolution. I learned last night in conversation with the nuns that there is now in this town a Protestant minister, or a heretic, as they call him, with his sister, on their way from Mexico to the United States. I made inquiry about them, and I discovered that the extreme jealousy of the Catholics on the score of Protestant ministers coming among them, in these times of revolution has induced them to sift every circumstance in relation to these people. It occurred to me that I would procure an introduction through you to them, and, if in your judgment, their character suited, I would put myself under their protection and journey with them to the United States."

According to her wishes, I inquired for these people.

Such was the bigoted jealousy of the Catholics that I found no difficulty in obtaining directions to their stopping place. There was in the town a hotel where the people from the States, who had begun to travel in considerable numbers from the American frontier to Mexico, stayed. Here I found the gentleman and his sister, introduced myself, and made known my object. The gentleman was shrewd, and perfectly aware of the light in which Protestant ministers were viewed here. My dialect, and everything about me, shortly convinced him that I was no spy, and he became communicative at once. He told me that his name and title were the Reverend William Cody, a preacher in the Methodist Church, who had a local society in the Mississippi valley; that his society had heard much of late about the country in the interior of Mexico, and had received high impressions of the mines, its fertility, and the richness of its products. They had become disgusted with their slow and laborious way of gaining a living. They had an impression that a revolution was at hand in this country, and they wished to be among the first who, in a new order of things, might reap the advantage. They had sent this gentleman as a precursor to spy out the land and bring back some of its best clusters of figs and ascertain the prospects and advantages of gaining a tract of land where they might settle together. He had commenced this journey with his sister and easily ascertaining how an avowed Protestant minister would chance in that country, he had doffed the character for a while, or rather, sunk it in that of a land speculator. As such, he had a passport. He had made his way to the City of Mexico and this far back without committing his character. But the recent revolution having been rather unfavorable to the influence of priests, and all parties being involved for the time in suspicions from every quarter, he had be-

gun to feel it safe to take his real character from his pocket. The natural zeal of proselyting had operated on him, and he preached to some Americans in this city. It reached the ears of the priests and magistrates, and nothing but the condition of the country saved him from the mines or the gallows.

The sister was well formed and rather pretty; half fine and half Quakerish in her dress; of unlettered shrewdness and the severe sanctity of restraint and seriousness, so characteristic of the profession. A certain smile, that showed fine teeth, and a pretty movement of the head, evidenced a little spice of woman, mixed up with the ingredients of the saint. The man was large, finely formed, and broad chested; with plump and ruddy cheeks, a rather handsome face, and a voice naturally deep, mellow, and delightful, but a vile habit had caused him to twang it through his nostrils with a sound not unlike a brazen trumpet. His suit was solemn black, and made with the most rigid regard to the Methodistic costume.

Occasionally deep sighs, and groans half suppressed, as if from distress of colic, and frequent ejaculations of the words, "Gracious Lord!" did not conceal from any observer of ordinary acuteness, the quickness of his apprehension upon every point of worldly advantage. I made him acquainted with the character and condition of my amiable *protégée*. When I spoke of her exquisite sensibility, and her great beauty and goodness I perceived by his excitement that he would try to conquer the fair subject. When I mentioned that her father had been ennobled, and had left her an immense fortune in British funds, his habitual caution and apparent elevation above all thoughts of earth forsook him in his eagerness to obtain so promising a prize. The flush of trembling impatience to close with me, and undertake the job actually flashed in his face. He caught



the aroused suspicion of my eye. He uttered one of his suppressed groans, and in a moment he had the air again of having the world under his feet. I felt an internal distrust at the thought of resigning this frank and amiable girl to the care of a man capable of such art and design. But the protection was in most points better than could have been expected in such a place; and in some points as good as could be desired. The whole aspect of things showed clearly that no advantage would be taken, but that which would result from the conquest of the mind of my *protégée* in a state peculiarly favorable to imbibing such impressions as the plan of operations would naturally tend to produce. He so readily comprehended that I was not a fit subject to work upon, and he saw with the utmost circumspection how to conduct himself, and consented to be introduced to Jeannette. He affected to be indifferent, while the inner man was trembling with eagerness and impatience. He finally consented that if all the parties desired it after the introduction he would agree to take her along with them.

I introduced Jeannette to him and his sister. I was half amused to see her cast her mild and pensive eye upon the form of the brother and sister, and traverse them from head to foot. The first impression was the obvious one to an unsuspicious mind of the purity and sanctity of the parties, and the perfect safety of their protection. The next was that curiosity would be gratified, and that people so different from any that she had seen would furnish her a new study. The subject of her wishes was introduced by herself in a few words. As soon as she touched upon her melancholy, and the cause of it, so fair an opportunity was not allowed to escape; and with his deep, mellow voice, and his eye cast upward, he spoke most eloquently upon his favorite topic. The manner of all this was perfectly

new to Jeannette. She was melancholy, and was disposed to deep religious feeling. His voice, his manner, so solemn and austere, struck a latent string, which only needed this keynote to cause it to vibrate. When he spoke of religion, as comprising all that we need on earth, of the union of happy spirits above, and of the necessity of treading the earth under foot, every word thrilled upon the heavy heart of Jeannette, and her first feelings were that of thankfulness, that in losing my society she would thus have inexhaustible resources open to her by another, a character so saint-like and superior, and so little to have been expected here. The observant eye of the minister quailed under the frank and straightforward inspection of Jeannette. Persons could scarcely be better satisfied with one another. All the arrangements of preparation on her part were intrusted to me, and they waited her time for departure. He asked her how soon she would be able to depart, and with a voice trembling with emotion she asked me when I proposed to leave Coahuila, for that she could not think of departing for my country and leave me in that place. Her departure was fixed to take place in two days, as my arrangements in her favor could not be settled in a shorter time. In a long and confidential conversation, I promised her, if I were spared and circumstances admitted, to return this way in a year and find her out wherever she might be. I gave her letters of introduction to my parents, if she should be disposed to continue her journey so far. I had all the terms upon which the parties were to journey or reside together drawn up and executed with legal exactness, and the whole plan was settled on the footing of services rendered on the one part, and full compensation on the other. She afterward had sufficient reason to see the prudence of these precautions.

I hesitated how to inspire in her confiding nature a

sufficient degree of caution about putting her property in these people's power, without at the same time inspiring a distrust of them unfavorable to her peace and enjoyment while in their society. I endeavored, generally, to insinuate that it would not be safe for her to measure human nature by the standard of her own heart; that man was everywhere and under all circumstances a being so intrinsically selfish, and, at the best, so liable to be actuated by mixed motives, that, for her own independence and comfort, she ought to hold her affections, her confidence and her property as much as possible in her own control; and that little had ever been lost by distrusting appearances and being slow in confidence. In fact, I turned sage and philosopher, and gave the sweet girl as many grave maxims to regulate her deportment as the Don did Sancho when he sent him away to govern his oil land.

When I had brought my chapter of maxims to an end, she turned her melting eye full upon me. "And how came you to know so much about human nature," said she, "and bad human nature, too? I know that you have not drawn from your own heart. Have you seen a great deal of evil? Can there be cause for distrust of people who always seem to have heaven in their eye? My dear brother, you would tremble if you knew how near I have been, during the past night, for I slept not a moment, coming to the resolution to accept the alternative that you have placed in my power. This must be a bad world. Every one says so. How tranquil and confiding I have always been with you? Why should we part now?" "Indeed, Jeannette," I answered, "propose that question to your own heart." "It must be," she replied, "and I will remember every word you have said, and when I want to be cautious and prudent, I will think of you. One thing I advise you. Woman is change-



able, they say. Unless you wish to be burdened with a wife, depart quickly. Another thing I propose, and I am sure you are too kind to hesitate, and that is, to divide my fortune with you. My dear father, while living, intended to have made you equal with us in this division. There were then three; and there is now but one. The reasons for carrying his wishes into effect have been gathering weight; and in offering you this I am not thinking of compensation for kindnesses that are beyond price; but simply carrying into effect the wishes of my father." To this I replied that to a soldier of fortune, rushing into a contest, in a revolution so full of danger and uncertainty, money, beyond my immediate wants, was of no use, and to that extent she knew that I was already supplied. But I promised that, on my return, I would converse with her on the subject and consent to anything that would give her pleasure. The only return I could make for so generous a proposal was to offer her the services of Fergus, so far as I could induce him to accompany her; and his services would be to her invaluable. To this she replied, that fond as she was of Fergus, and much as he would remind her of me, that she could never consent to take from me so faithful a friend, and one who would be so necessary to me.

As he had always manifested a wish to go to the United States, I mentioned to him my purpose. Said I, "Fergus, you have always been wishing to go to my country. I have no need of a servant where I am going; nor do I wish to take you into any dangers. You can now go on to my country with Jeannette, and all the kindness and fidelity you show to her will be more than done to me." He scratched his head and appeared to be in a study for a moment. But Jeannette was away, and he felt himself at liberty to say all that was in his heart. "Why," said he, "yer honor seems to want to get

rid of me, and I know I am of no great account. Yer country must be a good country, for I have heard it for certain that whisky is but little dearer than water, and that every man is at least as high as captain. Jeannette is a sweet, good girl, and the prettiest but one in the world. I would give her three fingers of either hand any day. But, God love yer honor, I would give ye my whole body, and my blood and bones into the bargain. If yer honor turns me away, good. But yer honor don't think I'm such a coward as to be afraid of the Dons. I go with yer honor, come devil, come dobbie. Further, your honor, I don't like that queer minister-man, at all, at all. Bother him! don't his voice twang in his nose like a trumpet? Do yer think he didn't ask me my religion? Ay, and I told him my father's to be sure. And then he run on such a rig! Oh! Bother him, he turned my brain round like a smoke-jack. But for one thing the devil will have him, that's certain. He said that if I worshiped the saints (Saint Patrick among them) I should go to hell! Think of that, yer honor! I'm no coward, but I'd rather fight the Dons than go with such a man."

The remainder of the time until we parted Jeannette passed for the most part with me in conversations so affectionate and solemn that they were not soon forgotten. The morning they started I aided her to mount her horse. Fergus wept like a child. The minister uttered his deep farewell. Neither Jeannette nor myself trusted our feelings to words or looks. I received the final pressure of her hand and heard the receding tramp of their horses die away in the distance. You may imagine the loneliness of my apartment when I returned to it and found it empty.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## AMONG FRIENDS AND ENEMIES.

A REGIMENT was making up in Coahuila for the City of Mexico and the service of Iturbide. There were some adventurers from the United States in the regiment. The members generally professed to be patriots, and they gladly received me as a volunteer among them. The society of my compatriots, and still more of Fergus was some relief to my mind in the bitterness of Jeannette's loss. But how dreary did the selfish and heartless society about me seem in comparison to hers. As we drew near to Durango another train of thoughts began to supplant those of loneliness and solitude. My heart beat more rapidly at every step. Everything began to bring Isabel before me. The new position of things in which her father's family were placed might abate something of the lofty tone of his feelings, and I entertained hopes in spite of myself. Fergus, too, was delighted with the thought of having the range of his fat kitchen once more. Judge of our disappointment, when, on entering Durango, I inquired for the Conde, and found that he and his family had been summoned by the new government to Mexico, under penalty of proscription and confiscation of property in case of refusal.

The father of Dorothea met me in the street and insisted upon my accompanying him home. He there brought



down the chronicle of events to the present time, and he gave me a connected view of all that had happened while I was in the mountains. Dorothea was the same dashing and gay young lady that I had formerly known her, equally fond of dress and display; equally kind and ready to forgive my want of taste and gallantry to this time, and receive me still, and, if I still continued blind, equally ready to console herself, and look out for another. When she saw that I was determined to go on to Mexico, she caused to be prepared for me many little articles of the first necessity, and furnished me with many things for comfort, and the ordinary ornaments of a soldier and begged me to accept them in memory of her. In all this kindness there were few words and little circumlocution. All seemed to be mercantile and matter-of-fact business. Her father, too, undoubtedly fulfilling her wishes, offered me a purse with soldier-like frankness. When I informed him that my purse was yet well filled, he smiled, shook his head, and remarked that in this country a handsome young man that was well liked with the ladies had nothing to fear.

I might give you a sketch of the particulars of my journey from Durango to the City of Mexico, but it would betray me into details beyond my purpose. To take a retrospective view of what had happened in the centre of this empire, where I had not yet been, would be equally foreign to my plan.

The regiment with which I had marched joined the imperial army at the City of Queretaro, and Fergus and I continued our course alone to Mexico. Traveling at our leisure, I omitted no opportunity to gratify the eye and imagination as we went along.

The City of Mexico, though on an elevated table of more than seven thousand feet above the level of the sea, has still the appearance of occupying a low, marshy situa-

tion, as in fact it does. It has been more than once inundated by the accumulated water of the lakes during the rainy season. I was within a league of this celebrated city before I had a distinct view of it; and then the wide circuit, over which arose so many spires and turrets, and above which lay the murky smokes, and the dim mist of a city, gave me a magnificent idea of its extent. None of the cities of my own country raise so much promise in proportion; for the Catholic cities have a greater number of spires than the Protestant cities. The approach to this city, as is the case generally with the Spanish cities in America, is mean; and you are led to them by clay cabins, through muddy lanes, where hundreds of domestic animals dispute the mud and dust with the passing traveler. But all this only forces the immediate contrast of magnificence and splendor more strongly on the eye. Travelers competent to compare have said that few cities in the world exceed this in magnificence of its buildings. Every one has heard that this is the city of churches, and notwithstanding my raised expectations, the number, grandeur and solidity of these colossal structures were matters of astonishment.

There was an appearance of a *fête* and display in the streets and squares as we rode slowly through them. The coronation of the Emperor had not long since taken place. The forced rejoicings of that occasion were hardly over, before there was an illumination for three nights in succession, on account of a recent victory that the Emperor's troops had gained over some patriot guerillas. We arrived on the second evening of this illumination. It was produced with colored lights and had a most brilliant and gaudy effect. As we rode leisurely along the magnificent streets, crowded with people, the greater part of them glittering with lace, while their dress terminated in rags,

I felt what every traveler of any sensibility has felt, on arriving in a strange city, with double force, the solitude of my own condition, in comparison with these moving thousands, so joyous and gay, who have their affinities, even the miserable lepers their circles of friendship, that lie together under their open sheds. In this vast city there was but a single family that I knew, and with that family, pride, with a multitude of other considerations, forbade me from attempting to renew my acquaintance, unless advances on their part, or very different circumstances on mine, should call for its renewal. I spent so much of the evening in riding about the city, comparing its gaiety and brilliance with my own loneliness, that the night was closing in before we had found a shelter in which to spend it. Here I found my knowledge of the language to be of infinite service. That, and my wearing the costume of the country prevented me from exciting distrust and suspicion as a stranger. I was directed to that splendid inn, called "Sociedad Grande," and there I obtained lodgings for myself and Fergus. From an American gentleman of high standing, who had long resided in the city, and who now had lodgings at this inn, I obtained a succinct, but lucid view of things, as they were at present in Mexico.

Iturbide appears to have been a soldier of fortune, possessing the single requisite of personal bravery. When taken from the field, and there he seems to have been properly competent only to a subordinate command, he shows a miserable destitution of every requisite quality of a ruler. His learning was very meager and superstitious. His vacillating policy was at once mean, rash, timid and cruel. Chieftain after chieftain had been sacrificed. I learned here that the brave and noble Morelos had fallen a sacrifice to the new order of things. My



amiable friend, Don De Oli, was minister of war, and the deeper counsels of the father Jerome, united with his, were supposed to sway the measures of the imperial government. This intelligence enlightened me in a moment, as to the ground I had to expect any honorable place in the present order of things. These men ruling the star of the ascendant, it was even questionable if I were safe in the city. On a very little inquiry, I was clearly impressed, that an honest man could have no part or lot in this matter, and had nothing to do but to get away as fast as possible from the country or remain here in profound concealment.

The Gazette of the morning after my arrival contained a long and pompous account of the illumination of the preceding night, the rejoicings of the people, and a ball, graced with the presence of the imperial family. I was reading along with careless indifference, and wading through the string of titled guests, when my eye was arrested and fixed upon the name of Doña Isabel, who was mentioned as the brightest star of the constellation of beauties. The comforting addition, of her being engaged to his Excellency, the minister of war, and shortly to be united to him, was given as the report of the evening. There were many other details, equally agreeable and refreshing. It was in fact the common report of the city, and the beauty, accomplishments, and wealth of the lady were matter of common discussion at the tables in the Sociedad Grande.

My first thought was to fly from the city, which became hateful to me, and to return and overtake Jeannette, before she should have contracted indissoluble engagements with another. But I found the influence of some unaccountable motive still detaining me here. I spent this and the following day in wandering about the city, viewing its churches

and towers, its curious collections of plants, aqueducts, its Alameda, its astonishing contrasts of meanness and magnificence, opulence and poverty. I believe no other place on the earth presents them to the eye in a manner equally glaring. I could have spent weeks in these meditations, if my heart had been more tranquil.

On returning to my lodgings this evening, Fergus informed me that a note had been left for me, in my absence, and that he had vainly endeavored to find out the bearer, or trace the mode of its conveyance. "But," said he, "maybe yer honor can make out the hand." In truth, I knew the fair and beautiful characters as soon as they met my eye. I broke it open, and read with trembling eagerness, these words in the handwriting of Doña Isabel: "Your life is in danger, if you again go abroad unarmed, and alone in the dark. Why should you expose yourself without occasion or necessity? You have been traced out by enemies. Be always armed, and with your servant. It were better that you change your residence and give out that you were leaving the city."

I pressed the lines to my lips, and blessed her as my guardian angel, and began to think that the life in which she interested herself so much, was worth preserving. It convinced me, too, that, retired and unknown as I had thought myself, I had been discovered, not only by this fair friend, but, I doubted not, by my old enemies, the father and minister of war, who, it appeared, would never forgive my having twice saved their lives. I was aware of my danger, from their pre-eminence. But I had encountered so many dangers, and come off safe from them, that I began to feel a kind of reckless confidence in my destiny. At least, I said to myself, that the man who aspired to love Isabel ought not to allow invisible terrors to make him seek a retreat. I imparted that part

of the billet which intimated that I was in danger, to Fergus. Our suspicions were mutually confirmed by his informing me that a stranger had accosted him the preceding evening, in Spanish, and had made the most minute inquiries about me, my place of residence, my associates, and my objects here. Our conclusion was, that Don De Oli had found us out, and that his object was to destroy me by assassination, of which I did not doubt him capable. I had too much reason to fear, if he could not succeed that way, I might be arrested with other state victims, who were daily led to the prisons, and there destroyed, or heard of no more. It was the fashion for every one in the city to go armed, where not a night passed without assassinations. I armed myself and Fergus to the teeth, and was determined that our lives should not be cheaply sold.

This evening I met one of the American officers who had been with me in the battle of Palos Blancos, near San Antonio. He had escaped from that battle, and made his way to Mexico, and now resided in the city, in considerable estimation. I did not approve of his method of gaining wealth. He had won large sums at a gambling establishment in the city, and was soliciting an extensive grant of land from the Mexican government. He informed me, in confidence, that he was associated with a body of patriots in the city, of increasing influence, and embracing some of the most influential men in the city. He informed me of their number, plans, and resources, and invited me to accompany him to their meeting. It passed at present under the name of an Inquiring Society, and though the government had some suspicions of the object of the meetings, either there was not enough known to form a ground of accusation, or such was the strength and importance of the members, that the government deemed it most



prudent to wink at their proceedings. I knew that there was little danger of committing myself any more with the government than I had already, and as my feelings inclined me to the patriots, I determined to attend the meeting.

My compatriot introduced me to the meeting. It was in a large subterranean apartment, in a retired quarter of the city, which had belonged to the assay department, and had been used as a chemical laboratory for private experiments upon minerals. Here were met those patriot chiefs who were dissatisfied with the assumed powers of Iturbide. I was introduced by the American officer as one who had fought honorably for the patriot cause in the internal provinces. It happened that a number of my compatriots who had escaped from the unfortunate fight of Palos Blancos were there, and they all bore a strong testimony to the manner in which I had conducted myself in that and other affairs. I was received with great applause and consideration. The meeting contained, beside Americans and provincials, more than thirty distinguished citizens. Among them, plainly but superbly dressed, and in all the conscious dignity of his intrinsic character, was the interesting exile of the mountains, who presided over this meeting. From the kindling of his eye, and that cheering look of recognition, which, under such circumstances, gave it such a value, the whole assembly saw that we had met before. In that way which can be done only by superior minds, he briefly alluded to that meeting, and he remarked that a man who had been so proscribed, and as I had been made known to him in the loneliness of his retreat in the mountains, in the discharge of such tender and interesting duties, as brought me to his retreat, could not be deemed unworthy of the confidence of this meeting. That he, for his part, welcomed with a full

heart every native of the country of Washington, that the cause called not for mercenary and unprincipled adventurers from that or any other country, but for educated and well principled young men, who had imbibed the free air, the independence and freedom of that great and rising country; that he deemed the accession of such men to their cause an omen for good. The meeting seemed to expect me to express my feelings, and I did it with the utmost frankness. I averred that though I had been unfortunate in the cause of the patriots, I was still as much attached to it as ever. I admitted that I had visited the city, expecting to find things very different from their present situation, and that it had been my intention, in that case, to offer my services to Iturbide, supposing that the revolution, headed by him, was favorable to the liberty of the people, the great cause which had been and always would be, dear to me; that since my arrival, and inquiry into the character of the man and the measures now prevalent, I had no more confidence in this government than in that against which I had been in arms; that I felt my heart united with all honorable and well principled men, in fair and decided opposition to the government; that I would aid with all my powers any measures which would tend to overthrow it, and rear on its ruins a constitutional government of the people's choice. I was cheered with great and unmerited applause, and was immediately admitted as a representative from the internal provinces. I was called upon to give my views of things in that quarter, as related to the objects of the meeting, the inclination of the people, and generally, the power, wisdom, courage and resources of the patriots. On all these points I made a brief statement, which comprised all that I knew which would throw any light upon their counsels.

The point chiefly in discussion was the extent of the resources of the patriots in various parts of the country; and whether the country was yet ripe for open opposition to the imperial government. A general arrest of the most patriotic members of the legislative council had just taken place, and some of the members were of the opinion that the excitement created by that arrest afforded a favorable opportunity to raise the banner of liberty. After various opinions, some in favor and some against this measure, had been advanced, my judgment was asked for. I spoke at first of a general union, remarking that so many attempts had proved abortive, because the insurgents had not been simultaneous, and had not understood one another; the enemy had been allowed to destroy them in detail because they had not been united. I was for cultivating a general correspondence, for ascertaining with precision the pulse of the country, and avoiding those premature and rash undertakings that had hitherto been so fatal. This was the main theme of my address, and I fortified the principal points in it by a strong reference to the scenes in which I had been personally conversant. The speech, such as it was, gained for me the favor of some of the most distinguished members, and was received with unbounded applause. My views happened to coincide strongly with those of Conde De Alva, the wealthiest and most influential man in the city, or perhaps in the Empire. He was at this time corresponding secretary of the meeting, in fact, its organ, and, next to Victoria, its most efficient cement.

After the meeting closed, I was highly complimented by my American compatriots, and received many civilities from the members generally. I had many pressing invitations from them, to come and reside with them during my stay in the city. Among others, I received the most



gratifying notice from Conde De Alva. He made very particular inquiries respecting my objects, pursuits, and employments, and the probable time of my stay in the city. He gradually unfolded to me his motive for making so many inquiries. He informed me that he had been in search of a private secretary, who could translate, and who understood different languages, and was a soldier. He was pleased to say that the fluency and correctness with which I spoke their language, turned his thoughts upon me from the first moment of my speaking; that in the course of the debates, he had made inquiries of one of my compatriots, in whom he had confidence, respecting me, and the result had been highly satisfactory, particularly, as he had been informed, that I had been regularly educated, and was grammatically acquainted with English and French. He proceeded to state the nature of the duties, and the proposed salary; and closed by asking me if I were willing to accept it.

I answered, that from present impressions, it would be precisely the employment I should have selected, but that I wished a couple of days for deliberation upon the subject, and that in the meantime, for further information respecting my character and qualifications, I referred him to the Conde De Olmedo. He added that the reference was very satisfactory, and that his family was in the habit of visiting with the Conde's. He proffered the customary civilities of his house, and proposed to show me the city and its amusements, until I made my selection. This offer, upon deliberation, seemed more and more gratifying. The employment was both respectable and lucrative. The protection was that of a man so high in rank and influence, that although he was known to be viewed with a suspicious eye by Iturbide, even he was afraid of him, and brought no articles of impeachment against him. I should have

in this office, an ostensible vocation, and should not feel myself on a footing with those numerous gambling and speculating adventurers from the United States. My heart whispered, too, that here I should either see or hear from Doña Isabel.

The Conde De Alva was a Creole, and his forefathers were born in this country. His income was almost without limit. Under the royal *régime* he had been considered the richest man in the Spanish dominions, and his manner of spending his income was generous and princely. He was the high-minded and munificent patron of every generous and noble undertaking, and held out a sustaining hand to genius and taste. He was young and of fine appearance, and his family was reputed the most beautiful in the Empire. His eldest daughter, Clara, ranked, in general estimation, in beauty to Doña Isabel. She was scarcely fourteen, an age, however, at which a young lady is considered marriageable in that country. For it is a well known fact, that in this country both the mind and the form are developed some years earlier than at the North.

At the assigned time, I waited on the Conde, and was shown up the marble flight of stairs in front of his palace; then, traversing a long portico, supported by Ionic columns of marble, and shaded in front by laurels and palms, I was conducted to an anteroom, set apart for the proposed office, and connected with a splendid and extensive library. I was here received by the Conde with marked politeness. He informed me that he had felt satisfied before the inquiry, but that he had called on the Condesa, the Conde being out, and mentioned that I had referred him to that family. He added, "I obtained not simply a character. I will not task your modesty by particulars, but if I may believe her, you are a Hercules, a slayer of monsters, an

eighth wonder of the world." I closed the contract with him, and was conducted into my new office. My employment consisted much in translating, furnishing draughts of replies for him to use, and suggesting alterations before he signed certain papers. He wished me to add to these duties, that of librarian and keeper of his very extensive cabinet of minerals, fossils, and specimens in natural history. I had an apartment in the palace, and boarded with some young gentlemen of respectable Spanish families, who belonged to his establishment, and had had offices in the mining department. They were at present out of employment, the Conde not having chosen that any member of his family should hold any office under the Imperial government.

My duties were neither painful nor servile, and the discharge of them made me of necessity acquainted with the geography and statistics of the country, the distance, importance and the population of places, and gave me a great deal of exact local knowledge of the country. Every facility that I could desire to make myself acquainted with this great and interesting country, was now offered, and not offered in vain; for I put myself in earnest to these studies, every moment in which I was not occupied in the duties of my office. In the morning I walked to visit the natural and artificial curiosities of the city, and in the evening, always accompanied by Fergus, and fully armed, to the theatre. The decorations and scenery were splendid, and having said this, I need say no more about the theatre.

I was again in those tranquil and satisfied days, of which history has nothing to record. I only heard, incidentally, from Isabel; and then it was only the repetition of the common report, that she was shortly to be married to the minister of war. I had seen that I was passing the



scrutiny of the Conde, preparatory to more or less confidence. His increasing marks of confidence and kindness were indications that I was rising in his estimation. I made a new arrangement of his books, manuscripts and drawings, and a new catalogue of his cabinet of minerals and natural history. I introduced new order, in fact, created in all these departments a new and complete system. The greater facility of arriving at information in this new arrangement was obvious at the first inspection. The Conde was delighted, and said that my services were invaluable.

I had been a fortnight in the family, when I was invited to dine with it. I felt it a duty, that I owed to my patron, to be modestly, but richly dressed, in the customary costume of a private Spanish gentleman. At the appointed hour I was ushered in with a numerous company of invited guests, among whom were many distinguished characters from the United States, and some from England, to the vast and noble dining-hall. Very few of them could speak Spanish, and I was called upon to discharge the duty of an interpreter. I was introduced to the Condesa, who, though the mother of a number of children, the eldest, as I have remarked, turned of thirteen, did not herself seem much advanced of twenty. She was fresh, blooming and beautiful, and by her affability and gentleness, made the dignity of her rank and place forgotten in the deeper and more interior respect, due to condescension and goodness. The children were as beautiful as doves, and after dinner, were admitted into the room, in all the buoyant and frolicsome gaiety of childhood. The eldest daughter had, as the phrase is, been brought out, and she had the usual brilliant eyes, a small light figure, a beautiful face, rather pale, with a slight olive tinge, such as mark most of the matured countenances of

young ladies that I had seen in the city. She went through the ceremonies of introduction to the company, with perfect ease and familiarity of conscious rank and beauty, and with something of the manner of one that had been caressed too much, and a little spoiled by friends and dependents of the family. When I was led to her, she eyed me from head to foot, with laughing ease and composure. I felt my cheek glow, when I was conducted from her to the Condesa and Doña Isabel, and I noticed the conscious and rather confused smile in her face, when we were introduced as entire strangers. The two lovely young ladies were, of course, the principal objects of attention, after the Conde and his lady. The dinner passed off as such great and formal affairs generally do. It was impossible for even the perfect ease of the Conde and his lady to banish something of formality and restraint, which was increased by the circumstance, that most that was said required translation. The dinner was excellent, the wine produced something more of ease, and a more unrestrained flow of conversation. It is well known that no dessert in the world can equal that of this city, and the whole closed with coffee.

The foreign guests generally retired, and I took my hat to depart with the rest. It was understood that the ceremony of the meeting was over, and Clara came skipping and told me that she had her father's orders that I must defer my studies for this evening, and hold myself wholly at the disposal of the ladies; for that there was to be a promenade in the garden. It may be conceived that this was the pleasure above all others, that I should have desired, and yet, knowing that Isabel, and hearing that the minister of war would be there, I felt no little embarrassment at the thought of such a promenade. The perfect composure and assurance of Clara put me at

ease. I followed her and a number of Spanish gentlemen into the garden.

The sun was low and the birds were cheering themselves in his parting rays. A delightful coolness was in the air. In the distance were seen the snowy summits of San Puebla, their conical tops rising far above the clouds and emitting from their volcanic apertures columns of smoke, that in the rarefied atmosphere arose to immense heights. A sea of mountains in all directions bounded this lovely vale. In contrast with such natural sublimity was the beautiful garden, the perfection of art, seconded by nature, here so fertile in what is suited to a garden. Shades, verdure, fountains spouting water high in the air, which fell back with a delightful murmur into marble basins; statues, cascades, arbors and serpentine walks, pavilions and temples, in short, all the luxuries of opulence and all the beauties of landscape were scattered over this beautiful place.

Various groups and solitary couples were sauntering here and there; and the gay flow of conversation and the reckless laugh indicated that all enjoyed this charming place. The Condesa De Olmedo and the Condesa De Alva walked together arm in arm. Seeing me alone, Clara left the circle of which she had been the centre and came to me. "Confess, sir," said she, "that these mountains, this cool air, this pretty garden, these fine birds, and finer ladies, are a much more amusing study than those books that you pore over forever in my father's library. I am afraid I shall crowd too many good things at a time upon you, but I am going to lead you to a young lady that, I believe, has seen you before, and I conjecture that the meeting will not be disagreeable to either." Saying this, she led me to Isabel, placing me between them as we strolled along the alleys of the garden. We had scarcely



recovered from the emotions produced by this meeting, after so long an absence, and had not yet come in possession of the full powers of speech, when I saw my evil genius in an opposite alley, and Don De Oli, with the measured insolence of his new dignity, approached us. Isabel turned pale, and the arm which I held trembled. I returned as slight a bow as his, and a very meaning look of recognition passed between us. "I came," said he, "to Doña Isabel, at the request of her father, to solicit the honor of her company in this promenade; but I perceive she is so respectably protected, and so happily occupied, that I suppose I may dispense with my offer. I shall only remark to her, that this gentleman's name is in my department on the list of malcontent and suspicious foreigners. I should have supposed, with the pledges given to her father, in recent conversations, that she would not have been disposed thus to commit herself and him with the government. Past events have made this gentleman but too well known to us, and she cannot but be aware how particularly disagreeable he must be to me, and to the government." Clara surveyed him while he was making this speech, to the centre and from head to foot. It was obvious that the minister of war was neither agreeable nor terrible to her. She made him, however, a very low bow. "Is this the face," said she, "which your excellency wears when you woo the young lady? You must see that you are particularly agreeable to her at this moment. As to this gentleman, sir, he happens to be at this time under the protection of my father. You are a very great man, no doubt. But I would hope, that such protection will secure him from menaces and rude treatment, especially with ladies, among whom he is an invited guest."

"Your father's name," he replied, "is a sufficient security for his family, but will not be considered by us a

shelter for all the factious and traitorous foreigners that he shall choose to harbor."

"Now, that is fine," she replied, "and these airs wonderfully becoming to the minister of war." I here remarked that I had nothing to reply to this kind of language in this place. The gentleman, no doubt, remembers with pleasure some former rencontres between us; that I could not condescend to spar and call names in this company, but hoped we should have the pleasure of a more private interview, for all such conversations. Clara added before he could reply:

"Yes, I dare say the gentleman can take care of himself in such a meeting. But just now I wish him to have a little private chat with this young lady. I begin to suspect that they have known each other before. There seem to be some strong dislikes between them, and I want them to be a little more acquainted, that they may shake off their prejudices and make peace. I dare affirm that half an hour's tête-à-tête in this pretty garden will bring all things right between them. Now, therefore, be it known, I, Clara De Alva, daughter of the Conde De Alva, ordain and declare, that they shall have a private walk together. I dare trust them, if his name is on your dark list; and I wish at the same time the honor of a private walk with his excellency the minister of war." Saying this with mock gravity, she took his arm, reluctant as he seemed, and led him away.

I was once more alone with Isabel, and it was obvious that our time was precious. "The circumstances of our former acquaintance, and the confidence you once reposed in me, Isabel," said I, "justify me in asking how you stand at present with that insolent and detestable man. I certainly may be permitted to ask if the reports in relation to you and him are true, why you have taken so much

cruel interest in me as to intimate that I am in danger. If you are indeed, as they report, to marry him, where can be my danger? Or what is life afterward to me?"

"I am not to marry him, sir," said she. "And if I were, I doubt not you would be both well and happy afterward. Let me be frank with you. You know well that there is neither affectation nor pretence in the interest I take in you. I have been informed how you parted from Jeanette, and all my good opinion of you is renewed. You are, no doubt, acquainted with the history of the late revolution that has made that weak and wicked man, Iturbide, what they call an emperor. Don De Oli, after my father's return to Durango, was treated coolly by us all. I had hoped, after my father had resigned his command in disgust, that he was awakened from his dreams of ambition, and that I should be persecuted on account of this man no more. But he conceived a deeper and deadlier aim of coming at his object, and his revenge. He and the father confessor left us almost without notice, and made their way to this city. They gave in their adhesion to the government, and timed it so well as to secure for the one the place he now fills, and for the other the secret but efficient direction of the imperial councils. The first knowledge we had of this new order of things was an official notice, signed with the imperial hand, notifying my father that he must come up to the imperial city and give in his adhesion on pain of confiscation. We well knew that there would be little ceremony about executing this threat in case of refusal. The wretch knew precisely what string to harp on. I would not be understood to imply the slightest want of filial respect for my father. I could yield anything to his wishes, even life; anything but this detested union. It is said to be in the order of nature that men, as they advance in age, become more at-



tached to wealth as they lose their relish for everything beside. As all other passions, even ambition among them, become enfeebled, all his desires seemed to be concentrated in that single point—regard for his immense possessions. My father obeyed the summons, and carried us with trembling haste to the capital. The wretch now became the favorite of the emperor, and plays continually upon my father's fears of losing his estates. He suspends the horrors of confiscation continually over our heads, and keeps my father as true to his purpose respecting this detested union, from fear, as he once was from ambition.

“My father, finding it useless to operate upon my fears, like Don De Oli has reversed all his former modes of influence and has adopted one a thousand times more difficult to resist. He assumes before me the air of a suppliant and throws himself on my pity. The very idea of seeing my aged father, so venerated by us all, one so high in power, and so used to submission from others, himself assuming the attitude of a suppliant to his daughter, is terrible and revolting. He calls himself a forsaken and dishonored old man, hastening to the same end with so many ruined nobles in the Old World, and nothing will prop his falling fortunes but my consent to this union. He points me to the consequences of drawing down upon him the wrath of the weak and worthless emperor. Confiscation, poverty and disgrace together, he assures me, would kill him, and I hardly doubt it. My mother admits the worthlessness of the man, and hates him scarcely less than I do, and yet insists that there are emergencies when a good child will yield all her inclinations and devote herself to her parents. She thinks this a crisis of that kind. But, sir, I feel that I have not this spirit of self-sacrifice. To their tears and entreaties I reply, that hating, abhorring him as I do, they may bid me die, but not

marry him. I propose to them, and I consent, to temporize; and I promise so far to conquer my loathing, as to soothe him. At present they seem satisfied with this, and their object and mine is to gain time. We all hope they will not be able to maintain themselves on their dizzy eminence long. In conformity to this plan, I task my feelings, to dance with him, and receive his attentions in public. I even allow him to hope that if he is not precipitate, and allows me my own time, I may, perhaps, in the end think favorably of him. It is horrible violence to my feelings. Would your Protestant system of morals hold this deception guilty? All this succeeded well enough until he found you were here. He discovered it by the emissaries of the police sooner than I knew it. The horrid flashing of his eye and the fiend-like expression of his countenance told me what he felt on knowing that you were here. He cautioned me against renewing my acquaintance with you, and expressed a suspicion that I was privy to your arrival, and intimated that he had both the will and the means to dispose of you. 'Certainly,' said I, 'Don De Oli, you must estimate me very highly to think of winning my regard by threatening his assassination. I say nothing of what he has done, and what he has forborne to you. To me, you must think it a short way to my heart, to murder that man.' The malice of his heart was sufficiently visible in his pale countenance. But he affected to be cool, and remarked that I could not be so little read in human nature, as not to attribute all his feeling to love and its natural attendant, especially in a Spanish bosom, jealousy. 'Why else,' he asked, 'should I have any antipathy to him?' I answered, in the bitterness of my spirit, 'The natural, instinctive and everlasting antipathy of bad to good, base to noble, hell to heaven.' You see, sir, in what courteous terms we conduct our wooing, and how little

reason you have to be jealous, if I might flatter myself that you could entertain such feelings toward me. The time is precious. I am ready to believe you love me. I am but too sure of my own feelings. Your arrival, so unexpected, has inspired in me the extreme of both joy and sorrow. But destiny, I should say Providence, I trust, watches over us, for you are fixed just where I could have wished you to be. Iturbide is afraid of your patron. I have conversed with him. I have done more. I have laid open my heart to his lady, and the family are your friends. If I can only gain time, this imperial throne will crumble. You are now in the right place to gain glory and distinction. The times call for such characters as yours, and you are in the right place to avail yourself of all chances. I need not urge you to cultivate the favor of the family in which you live. You will yet be distinguished; my heart tells me so. Only get a name, and gain power, and the hand of Isabel will be at your disposal as her heart has long been."

If strong emotions always render us eloquent, I was eloquent. I was probably extravagant for a character that she had rather considered as verging to the side of coldness; for she smiled as she said, "This is very pretty and quite enough. I believed it all before. For a while, sir, you must be guided by me. Be prudent and you shall have your turn after a while. It comports with my plan to return and finish the evening with that detested man. I do not wish you to endure the torture with me. Avoid him as much as you can." Saying this she led the way to rejoin Clara and Don De Oli.

When we came up with them, I made a motion to withdraw. "Oh, no, sir," said Clara, "you do not so easily escape the service of the ladies, when you are once fairly enlisted under their banner," and she withdrew her arm from Don De Oli and took mine and we walked away.



"How I hate that man!" said Clara, as soon as we were by ourselves, "and there is no love lost, either. The loss of his office and influence has turned the head of the poor old Conde, Isabel's father. To save his estates he is persecuting that sweet girl to marry this wretch. As soon as she came here I saw that she not only hated him, but loved another. She has confessed to me that you are he that has robbed her of her heart. I am much astonished at her taste, though it must be conceded that you are a little more tolerable than the other. But then, to palliate the matter a little, she says that you are brave, romantic and good, and that you have saved her from savages, floods, assassins, and I know not what. While she was making you such a reliever of distressed damsels, I wonder it never occurred to her that I might have a liking to you myself." "You?" I asked with surprise. "Yes, and why not I? I have a heart, sir, as well as another. And suppose it should be so, what then?" "Why, then," I replied, "I suppose your father would dismiss me immediately, and shut you in a dark closet, and feed you on slender diet until you recovered your heart's health and your senses." "Your humble servant," said she, "I perceive that you think me a child, and understand not the affair. Why, sir, my mother was married before she was of my age, and so are half of the titled ladies in the country. Not at all, sir. I see you are not gifted as a prophet. My father would look grave, my mother would shed tears and make a speech, and I should first be sullen, and then fall to weeping, and to make me smile again they would consent, and you would be the happy man. But, mind you, sir, nothing of this is likely to happen. In the first place, I love Isabel too well. In the next place, infant as you think me, I know men too well."

I had heard how rapidly the female form and mind are

developed in southern countries, but this most astonishing specimen of the fact struck me with surprise. But it was an agreeable one. She ran on with the volubility of a spoiled child. If I presumed, for the moment, on the tone of her mind, she seemed to be perfectly aware of it and reversed the strain of her conversation, and became sober, sensible and at times rising to sentiment and dignity. Before we parted, she told me that she had taken Isabel and me under her particular charge, and that we should see each other as often as possible.

At the next meeting of the patriots the Conde De Alva read a dispatch to the meeting, announcing that the republicans had again unfurled the banner of freedom at Vera Cruz. Santa Anna, who had conferred every benefit upon the Emperor and had been one of the principal instruments in raising him to the throne, had, through some of the intrigues of his miserable, misguided court, been dismissed from his command at Vera Cruz, which had been conferred on him as a reward for his bravery and services. He immediately assembled his favorite regiment and placed before them the indignities that he had suffered, and gave them a strong painting of the cruelty and perfidy of Iturbide; and he closed by exhorting them to throw off his yoke, and establish a government of the people. The speech was received with *vivas*, and the regiment immediately adopted the resolution.

Soon after this decisive act he sent a letter of explanation to the Emperor, reminding him of all he had done for him. He adverted with indignation to the return he had received, and declared, by the last act of ingratitude, he considered all his own obligations canceled and himself called upon to espouse the cause of a suffering and oppressed people. He reproached the Emperor for his acts of violence, oppression and cruelty, and

assured him that the people would never again be induced to trust a man who had once violated all his promises. For himself, he declared his determination to form a pure and simple republic, based upon the rights of man. Finally, he counselled Iturbide to renounce his assumed government, and throw himself on the generosity of the people.

There were many debates upon the question whether the country was ripe for the insurrection, and, as usually happens, opinions differed. When it came my turn to speak, I remarked that, happy as I was in my present employment, I should not feel satisfied while the banner of freedom waved in any part of the country, and that I should immediately proceed to Vera Cruz to offer myself as a volunteer in the corps of Santa Anna. A number of the younger members of the meeting followed my example, and the meeting dissolved amidst acclamations for the cause. The Conde expressed regret at the thought of my leaving him, but cordially approved of my determination, informing me, that in his opinion now was the time to act. I was to set out for Vera Cruz with a considerable body of volunteers, who were to unite with others at Puebla. The Conde exacted a promise from me, that when the campaign closed I should return and resume my duties; and in the meantime invited me to his table until I departed. In this situation it became my duty to escort his daughter to public places and the theatre. I accompanied the family to balls, and was treated as one domesticated.

I intimated my gratitude and surprise to Clara at this great and unearned confidence. She explained, in her laughing way, the cause of it. "In the first place," said she, "my parents have such an unbounded confidence in my correctness and discretion, that pride, as well as



gratitude, calls upon me to so deport myself that they shall have no cause to repent it. In the next place, my parents think Isabel the next immaculate to myself, and she will have you to be such a paragon of purity, decorum and honor that no harm can be extracted from you. Lastly, every one can see that you are so entirely in love with Isabel, that you might stumble upon a prettier and have no eye to see her."

It was rumored that Don De Oli was to start for Vera Cruz, to take command of the imperial forces against Santa Anna. I wished to remain until he was gone. I had seen Isabel but once since our first interview, and then only long enough in private to learn why she saw me so seldom; that it was according to her plan to put our enemies off our track. When it was reported that he had departed, I felt my breathing a little easier, and hoped that I should at least have some moments with Isabel before I departed for Vera Cruz.

One evening as Fergus and I were returning from the theatre, departing from our customary caution, and thinking that perhaps all danger was past, we wandered into a dark alley. At some distance from the lights we were attacked by three or four desperadoes in the dark, with dirks and swords. Fergus was slightly wounded in the onset. But we placed ourselves against the wall, discharged our pistols upon them, for we were both well armed, and defended ourselves until the city guards came to our aid, but the assassins escaped. I had no doubt that this was some of Don De Oli's revered care of my health.

I spent the afternoon and the evening of the day previous to that on which I started for Vera Cruz in the delightful garden of the Conde with Clara and Isabel. We even had our coffee brought to us and took it together.

This I count among the happiest evenings of my life. Isabel, freed from apprehension, at least during the absence of Don De Oli, and relieved for the present, from any entreaties from her father relative to him, had once more that tranquil and delightful manner which had so won my interest on the evening of the thunder storm. Our intercourse was that of minds that had long been separated and that now united with an eagerness and delight proportioned to the obstacles that had so long impeded it. I received many charges from both, how to deport myself as regarded my society and exposures. I could not have desired more marks of confidence and tenderness from either. Each gave me a ringlet of her raven locks to be wrought into my sword belt, thus constituting me their champion. Whenever the conversation became gloomy, or turned upon the exposures and dangers of the campaign, Clara, with some of her whimsical remarks, restored us to cheerfulness. At the same time that Isabel charged me not to expose myself, they both bade me not return without glory. Isabel assured me that she foresaw that this campaign would be decisive of our fate. After an evening too happy to be assorted with the common color of our days amidst a thousand kind wishes for the success of their soldier they sent me away.

From the Conde I had the most flattering letters of introduction to Santa Anna and the other chiefs, proposing me as a person who had sustained a high and honorable command in the patriot service, and recommending me to a similar command in this service. He gave me counsel with paternal kindness and seemed to take in me almost the interest of a father. With an affectionate shake of the hand from the Condesa and Clara, and with benedictions and kind wishes from him, I started once more a soldier of fortune and revolution for Vera Cruz.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### LOVE, THE POWER THAT CONQUERS ALL.

I THANK you for the invincible patience with which you have listened to the recital of my adventures. From now on my story will be told by another. You have had to make due allowance for egotism. You will have, hereafter, to make a still greater for a more blinding passion.

It is only necessary to premise that Isabel had in the convent in which she was educated a lady friend, a little older than herself, between whom was sworn one of the eternal friendships of young ladies, similarly situated. They were the companions of each other's secret hours, and the confidants of each other's secret thoughts. It so happened that soon after the Conde De Olmedo removed his daughter from the convent and brought her to America, this young lady married the royal commander of the castle of St. John d'Ulloa, at Vera Cruz, and traversed the ocean with her husband to his station. With this lady Isabel had been in the habit of constant correspondence. Almost every mail was charged with the burden of their secrets, and mutual vows of everlasting friendship.

These letters are exact copies of the mind of Isabel, and I confess that I continue to think well of the spirited and warm hearted writer. They portray neither a goddess



nor even an immaculate mortal, but a lovely woman, with all her weaknesses and foibles. I only selected those that keep up the thread of my narrative, from the point where I leave it. I should add, that they give a regular chronicle of all that befell her, from the first landing on the Mexican shore, to her residence at Durango. After her return from the valley of the Comanche, I have been, I find, the most important character in her thoughts and life. I am quite satisfied, I assure you, with my historian, for I find my ordinary actions transformed into exploits. In short, sir, read for yourself and make your own comments. All that I shall say further is, that the name of Isabel's fair correspondent at St. John d'Ulloa is Doña Letitia Sandoval, and that I was afterward honored with an introduction to her, and found her extremely beautiful and amiable. I leave you to read at your leisure. When you have finished, say so, and I am ready, if you continue so minded, to eke out the remaining chapter of my history up to this time.

MEXICO, Feb., 1824.

MY DEAREST LETITIA:

I informed you in my last letter of our arrival here from Durango. My father was in a continual fret of impatience lest we should not arrive in season to anticipate the decree of confiscation. That terrible word "confiscation!" There is nothing on earth I hate like Don De Oli, and the worst name I can call him is *Confiscation*. I am wholly unable to conceive how or why old men should become so intensely fond of money about the time they cease to be able to make any use of it. I believe he loves me, as the next best thing to money and the power he has lost. As to my dear, good mother, he may have loved her once; but that is

a thing quite gone by. Do you begin to love your husband less than at first, Letitia? More than once, on the way, he looked sufficiently sternly upon me, reminding me frequently that if I had not been a perverse and disobedient child I should have been, at this time, lady of the minister of war, and he perhaps prime minister. All would have been safe, and I in a fair way to ascend the topmost round in the ladder of eminence. I have found the advantage of keeping up the fair ascendancy that I have won, when this hated subject is discussed. So I told him that he must have singular notions of the power of the said minister to communicate honor, for that he well knew that he was a coward, a liar, and an assassin; and I know not if I added other epithets; but I had plenty more in my thoughts and I told him that if it would comfort him to have me die, I was ready to gratify him, but not in that way. Upon the word, I had to encounter a long and bitter philippic by way of comfortable evening domestic confabulation. My mother, as the conversation grew sometimes a little warm, put in a kind of neutral interpolation, partaking equally of assent and dissent, attempting to smooth down my father's brow, and remind me of the rights of paternity. Between apprehensions from Indians, patriots, robbers and royalists, for we seemed to be equally obnoxious to all, and this last and most horrid of all, confiscation, I had but an uncomfortable journey to the city.

We arrived safely at the imperial city and I saw his Excellency, my tormentor, rolling his terrible eyes of love at me. I had promised my father to do everything in my power that would tend to ward off the terrors of confiscation, so that he would consent to my plan to save time. So I threw into my manner of receiving him as much civility as I could command. And then, how pleased he was, even to childish delight. I must believe the odious being loves

me. How earnestly I looked around among the thousands of new faces to see if my beloved was not among them. If there be anything like mutual feeling he will be here, and I shall see him.

We have one of the noblest houses in the city, suitably furnished. I was presented to the Emperor as the elected of his favorite. Oh, what an Emperor! A person half German, half Spanish, the everlasting grin of deceit and simpering good nature on his face, where, notwithstanding all his efforts to counterfeit dignity, licentiousness and low breeding are indelibly stamped upon his head.

I was treated with great favor and distinction by the Emperor and his family. In the first ball I had the superlative honor to lead the dance, and for the remainder of the evening I was confined, by terms of treaty with my father, to the detestable Don De Oli. The men were swarthy, ugly, savage and ignorant beings; and the women yellow, awkward and less informed than the men. There were some brilliant exceptions. Among these was the beautiful and accomplished Condesa De Alva, fair, fresh and blooming, with contentment and satisfaction on her brow. She is young, yet has six children. Clara, the eldest, is but little more than thirteen, yet smart, accomplished and beautiful. In conversing with her you have the peculiar interest of talking with one so infantine that you feel the ease of conversing with a child. Perhaps at the moment, while you are indulging this carelessness, she flashes upon you with the grace and wit of an accomplished young lady. I have become well acquainted with her and she would have my secrets. She gave me much grave instruction, and bids me be cautious how I allow my hero to appear on the Mexican theatre, for that I have given her such an estimation of him, that she shall be tempted to try



to supplant me. Her family is one of the most distinguished in Mexico. The Conde enjoys the highest possible consideration, and in fact his immense influence turns the balance between the hundred contending factions. He is too simple in his manners, too much informed, too intrinsically noble, to be in favor with the Emperor, and Iturbide both dreads and hates him; and he owes his safety only to the circumstance that the Emperor dares not touch him. They call him a "Republican." Would you believe it, I am more than half patriot myself. Finding ——— a patriot, and the Conde De Alva a patriot, and Iturbide and his minister of war what they are, who would not be a patriot?

Amidst all the beautiful scenery of this city I want something. I want all. I need the presence of him who makes me feel that I have a heart; him, whose manner of a good and generous act makes me perceive that man can be noble; him, whose glance upon these mountains causes my eye to kindle with enthusiasm; him, whose voice and manner, inspire within me high, and I might almost dare to say, holy thoughts. In fact, away from him, I drag to these scenes of amusement for others, a body—they tell me it is well enough formed; but it wants a soul. I feel the bland and delicious atmosphere. I look at the mountains, pouring out the columns of smoke from under their everlasting snows. I contemplate the most beautiful and the richest valley in the world. I hear the foolish people, who have nothing else to say, talk of all this, as they do of the weather, and say, "How fine this is!" I stupidly echo the remark, "How fine this is!" In short, I have little reason to hope that I shall ever see him again, and I am equally incapable of enjoying nature or myself.

Yours as ever,

ISABEL.

MEXICO, February, 1824.

DEAREST LETITIA:

Our Lady of the Pillar preserve us! I have seen him again, and my heart beats even now so loud, that it disturbs my thoughts and my pen. I never needed a second look to assure me that it was the very same man. I had been driven to the Alameda, with our old duenna, who was ill, in company with my daily tormentor. The carriage windows were up on account of the air. He was walking in the street, and an Irishman, formerly a servant of my father, was walking behind him. How well I remember the calm and lofty port, the countenance so animated, benevolent, and mild! I gave a shriek, before I recollected myself; and then it was too late, for my countenance told the tale of what I had seen. His prying and malignant eye soon discovered in the group the person who had arrested mine. He expressed ironical regret at the cause of my alarm, and muttered something implying that he would not have such terrible objects in the way to annoy me. I gave him a look that I trust he understood, and told him that to filial regard to my father, he must be sensible, he owed all my endurance of his presence. "I know," I cried, "that you are equally cowardly and vindictive. But, venture to touch a hair of his head and I will move heaven and earth until an avenger of his cause shall be found. Not that I have, or expect to have any personal interest in his preservation beyond the common interest, which all ought to have in preserving the virtuous and the good. In this country of distraction and crime, we ought to preserve at least one good person. If you really wish endurance from me, much more, if you expect kindness, expect it only from using moderation and forbearance toward him. Make no use of your big powers toward him, and in the same proportion, you will

be sure of my taking a less active part in his favor. If you will promise me with a pledge, on which I might rely, that you would avail yourself of your influence to protect him, I should be willing to promise in turn, never to see him again."

He promised, but there was a sneer in his countenance, that the intense interest, which I took in his welfare, should be his pledge and his guaranty, and that he would not molest him, or allow, so far as his influence extended, that others should. He intimated, that if the event so desired by my parents, and himself, could take place, he would not only protect, but charge himself with the promotion of the young man. I thanked him for his kind intentions toward him, but assured him that if the promotion of the young man in question depended upon that issue, much as I wished it, it was likely to be slow in taking place. The conversation here dropped, I little heeded the promise he made, although in my eagerness to shield him, I would have made almost any engagement. I immediately put every agent in my power in operation, to find where he was. I soon discovered that he was stopping at the Sociedad Grande; and since then, what think you is my chief amusement? He has an Irish servant, Fergus, who used to live with my father, who is shrewd, faithful, and devoted to me, next to his master. This man finds some moments every day in which he visits me. He repeats to me all that his master says, does, and even thinks. You may be sure they are all about me. I know that all this is moonshine, but it satisfies my desires. Fergus promises never to disclose a word of all this to his master. He assures me, that in consequence of my intimation of danger, his master always goes armed, and takes him with him, and that he avoids evening walks, so that he can be in little danger from my admirer, except he be brought to a



mock trial and legal assassination. My apprehension for his safety is much moderated. Meanwhile the Conde De Alva, who is a naturalist, chemist, and philosopher, and engaged in extensive correspondence, and is moreover suspected of having a band of patriots at his disposal, wants a private secretary. Mr. Gordon, among his other qualifications, is a profound scholar, to my taste a doctor of all sciences, acquainted with many languages, in short, a great "Apollo." It occurred to me in a moment, that this was the very man the Conde wanted. Under his protection, he would be perfectly secure. They dare not touch the Conde or his friends. So I introduced myself to the Condesa, and told her all about this wonderful young man. I am sure I did not undervalue him, for she had all the while a meaning smile, and occasionally added, "Really! Surprising! Is it so? He is an astonishing man, sure enough!" To be perfectly frank, I told her my secret. I was deeply affected as I did it. She kissed me, and gave a tear to my feelings and story, and promised me that she would speak to the Conde of the matter. Clara, the little witch, had heard all. She expressed a great desire as she said, to see the eighth wonder of the world.

Clara has a prodigious name, and is prettier than a mere beauty. The man must be a phoenix who could stand her fascinations, if she chose to coquette with him. I trust to her pride, and I trust to his steadiness, for I am sure he loves me. More than all, in this family he will be improving, safe, and happy, and I will not be so selfish as to have a thought beyond that. He was invited to attend the meeting over which the Conde and Victoria preside, and had the good fortune to greatly distinguish himself in the debates. The Conde offered him the place of secretary. He accepted the offer, and has been in the discharge of his duties for some days. The family judge

of him as I thought they would. The Condesa, while pronouncing his eulogy, sportively tells her husband that it was a dangerous experiment to bring such a fascinating man into his family. Clara puts up her pretty lip, and appears not to hear, when in the presence of her parents; but when she speaks of him to me, she actually blushes, and manifests a sentiment in common with all that see him.

*In continuation.*

I have been with him. We took a walk in the beautiful garden of the Conde's with Clara. My heart was beginning to expand with the highest consciousness of joy, and Clara was chattering away to him in her customary fashion, when what bird of evil omen should light down upon us but Don De Oli. Both men started as though they had seen a serpent. Don De Oli affected the bashaw, the man in power, and talked to the other in a style of menace. I wish I could describe the look which he gave him in return. It said plainly enough, "Your worthlessness and the presence of the ladies are your protection." Clara, the dear child, has somehow contrived to anticipate the experience of years. She put on her stately airs with Don De Oli, and actually took on herself the endurance of his Excellency, and sent us off together on a beautiful evening to walk in a lovely garden. If this man has any fault, it is a disposition toward taciturnity. But you are not now to learn that I can talk enough for both. I assure you the man became talkative and eloquent. He held such discourse with his eyes, too, and was so modest and grateful, and so ready to be guided by me! Oh! If I could always be as happy as I was for that half hour's walk. He is delighted with his place. The family is delighted with him, and I am delighted with him; and I am delighted with everybody. We have, in some sense, tied up his

Excellency to his good behavior. I believe, after all, he partakes of the homage toward this extraordinary man, and is afraid of him, obscure and humble as he is.

How are you, my dear Letitia, in that cage of yours on the resounding sea? Is your husband as dear to you as ever? I hope when I see him, fierce royalist as he is, yet to make him a convert to the cause of the patriots. I lean that way myself. The refreshment of a long, frank and cordial letter from you is almost the only thing necessary to complete the present sum of my enjoyments. I am too happy. I tremble and look up in fear of some concealed and suspended thunderbolt. Commend me, I beseech you, to the Holy Mother, and believe me affectionately, etc., etc.,

ISABEL.

MEXICO, March, 1824.

DEAREST LETITIA:

The standard of the patriots is again unfurled, I am told, directly in view of your castle, in the city of Vera Cruz. With how little ceremony they treat emperors and kings and great men in these evil days upon which we are fallen. I suppose the royal cavalier, so dear to you, sees with an equal eye the fighting patriots and imperialists. Both are alike hostile to him, and when these parties have worried and weakened each other, he can with so much the more ease fall upon the victor and destroy him. To him all this fighting may be matter of indifferent regard. Not so with me. A man dearer to me than liberty, country, home, or all the world, except my dearer parents, and, the Virgin forgive me! except my dear mother, dearer than even they, is going to join himself to the patriot standard. I sometimes flatter myself that I am a patriot by instinct. Since I have been acquainted with this man I have learned to read English; I have been



deeply engaged in American history. What a great country! What a noble people! Compare their faces and persons with those of the people here, and what a difference! There is something independent and severe in the appearance and person of these people. There is not a book in my father's library that treats of them, or their history, but what I have thoroughly conned. But to my story; I am extremely cautious how I indulge in the society of this man. If he learned the half of my impatience to enjoy his society, I fear he would hold me cheap. For they say that men will not love too much love, or value anything that comes cheap. In fact, I dare not treat myself too much, or to often with that high enjoyment. I economize every moment, and feel as though I had acquired a title to enjoy it by forbearance before the treat.

We had a long walk together yesterday. What was the fruit of this ramble, the very anticipation of which was sufficient to rouse my pulse to fever quickness? Why, we walked side by side most lovingly indeed, but as silent as doves. He came out at last with the principal secret, and told me he was about leaving this city for Vera Cruz. It was now my turn to show emotion; and it was at first too great for words. As soon as I became collected from the first surprise, I told him that those who wished him best, wished him nothing better than to stay where he was, and that it was a conduct that militated against his professions to me, to leave a place where he could visit me at his choice. He then informed me that the patriot flag was again unfurled at Vera Cruz; that his principles, and he added, as his cheek reddened, his detestation of Iturbide and his minions forbade him to remain in an inglorious pursuit here, although he could at any moment look at the mansions of Isabel, when honorable men were rushing to the tented field. He added, that his determina-

tion had been approved by the Conde; that he expected appointment and rank in the patriot army; that there was but one way through the darkness of his prospects to the only hope of his heart, and that he saw no way for him, but to cut his path through it with his good sword. I know not if I give them rightly, but at the time I thought them pretty words, and I understood the meaning to be that he had no hope of gaining me, but by gaining power and distinction at the same time. I saw that his heart sank at the prospect of leaving me; and as he looked dejected, I believe that I threw as much encouragement as I could into my manner. I am afraid he thought me too fond, for I think I pressed his hand and gave him to understand that in me he had a true friend. I cautioned him against the assassin-dagger of Don De Oli, who is to command the imperial forces against the patriots. I conjured up so many horrors in prospect that my eyes actually filled with tears, and I was obliged to turn away to prevent his seeing them. I am sure that he discovered that I was a traitor to my king, for I expressed a decided wish that the patriots might prevail, and if they established a new government, above all things, that he might acquire influence enough to save my father's estate from confiscation. At seven in the evening I was compelled to leave him and see my persecutor. I told him so; and told him that when he saw with how much patience I bore this torture, I wished him to copy it.

I saw that hateful man. My parents have been saying everything but just enough to break my heart, in order to have me to at least say something decisive before he sets out on this campaign. I have a firm conviction that this campaign will be a decisive one; and may God grant that it may take from him forever the power of tormenting me or any one else. To get rid of him, I assured him

that if he would leave me free and unmolested to the end of the campaign, I would give him a final answer. He conceived it to be my intention to grant his request. How could I help it? At any rate, I am rid of him for the present, and I breathe easier. I have gained time, and God, I trust, will help the right cause.

*In continuation.*

Another proof of the villainy of Don De Oli, notwithstanding all his protestations of burying the hatchet, he went directly from these professions to plot the assassination of my beloved! As Mr. Gordon and his servant were returning from the theatre, in passing through a dark alley they were beset by three or four assassins. Pistols were fired, and dirks drawn, but they held them at bay until the police came up, and one of them was apprehended. He admitted who his employer was, and such is the present influence of Don De Oli, that the murderer was at once discharged. The wretch has now left the city. Heaven grant that it may be forever! And my dear preserver, too, is gone! I comfort myself that heaven has preserved him for some great and good purpose, or he would not have escaped so many perils. I saw him a moment before his departure. I can never forget his manner of taking leave. There is a reality in deep and genuine love. With him the uncertainty and suspense of his case, has given an air of sacredness and purity to his passion in perfect keeping with his character. He said that the favored warriors of other days had generally carried to the field some little token or souvenir from the lady of his love, but that the most he could hope even from a fortunate return, would be that my family would not absolutely disavow his cause, and that he should not find me another's, and that other his bitterest enemy. "You know my feelings full well," I replied. "In these degenerate days people are but too



apt to estimate causes by their successes. Return victorious, and you may hope all that you wish." But when he grasped my hand and said *adios*, I shed tears in abundance, and said a number of foolish things, upon which the wicked man actually pressed my cheek for the first time with his lips. He is gone, and though for others a more brilliant sun never shone, to me the blessed light of heaven is gloom. I am dispirited and in tears. Heaven preserve him! The Blessed Virgin watch over him! If he should fall, he will never know, he will never dream, to what an extent I have loved him.

I am, most affectionately yours,

ISABEL.

MEXICO, April, 1824.

DEAREST LETITIA:

I envy you, for you are daily near him who occupies all my thoughts. But such are the horrible barriers of party and opinion, that I presume you cannot meet him. We have had a large package from the patriots, that is, the Conde has had one, and they have had a battle; the imperialists had the advantage. Heaven be praised! My beloved is safe, and Santa Anna writes that he behaved gloriously. He was everywhere in the thickest of the fight, hunting, I dare say, for Don De Oli. They have appointed him colonel, and he has gained influence and respect far beyond his nominal command. Every dispatch is full of his conduct and praises. I rejoice in his glory. Angels and the Blessed Virgin preserve him, and bring him back in safety with his glory! To be admired and promoted in the cause which the Conde espouses, must be real glory. Then I read his own letter written to the Conde in Spanish. The purity of the language and style would have done credit to the Royal Academy. Of himself he writes with the perfect modesty and simplicity of a great man. He

says that Santa Anna is full of courage, that the patriots are no way disheartened, and every day the people are flocking to their standard. Indeed, the Emperor himself looks in doubt, and his eternal simper was this evening exchanged for a look of anxiety, and he appeared the better for it. He had a great deal to say about his Excellency, and after having praised him to the skies, he began to anoint me in the same manner. I repelled them, in a manner that could not be mistaken.

ISABEL.

MEXICO, May, 1824.

DEAREST LETITIA:

You have made my heart glad with your letter. You say that you espouse no cause that blinds your understanding, or takes away the power of discriminating truth from error, pretensions from reality. That is like you. You have taken interest enough in him from his being dear to me, to inquire him out. You delight me by saying that his deportment has won all praise, triumphed over envy, and even gained the applause of your husband. Every generous heart ought to feel the difference between an unprincipled adventurer, and the partisan, whose private life and deportment show that his heart and his principles are in the cause he espouses; and who in private pities, relieves, and spares those men for whose cause he professes to have taken up arms. It is only necessary to look at him, to see the motives which have carried him to the field are neither interest nor to take sides with the strongest. There is something that speaks when the heart is in earnest. I have never seen a man whose manner so strongly evinces that everything he does is a matter of conscience and principle.

*In continuation.*

Heaven be praised! They have beaten the imperialists,

and that, too, when the tide seemed to have turned against them. All admit that his intrepidity, coolness, and conduct retrieved the fortunes of the day, and turned the tide back upon the foe. He was covered with blood and glory, and yet came off from the conflict unharmed. I have returned my *Te Deum* on my bended knee. There are a thousand opinions here. Even my father seemed to doubt the imperial cause, and to waver for a moment. He admitted that every one allowed the palm of admirable conduct to his schoolmaster. I told him that the schoolmaster would yet play an important part here, and have a hundred times as much real and efficient influence as these miserable puppets that sustain and enact their parts in the ludicrous farce of imperialism for a day. But he is old, and, heaven forgive me! he is obstinate, and insists on the miserable old proverb, that a "bird in the hand," etc., and concludes with the prophecy that Don De Oli will return in triumph, and if there should be any overturn as I predict, it would be the putting down the present Emperor, and putting in his place his future son-in-law. Fergus's favorite maxim "two words to that bargain," came to my memory in answer to my father's proverb. How I long to see my hero!

*In continuation.*

Another battle and he is wounded! Oh, why cannot I be there to comfort and cheer him! You have sent your surgeon to him, to dress his wound. You would have won my everlasting love by that act alone, if you had not ensured it before. Letitia, if I have any weight with the Holy Father, you shall be canonized. How noble it is and how like you to do good to your enemies. Enemies! There cannot be enmity between two such minds as yours and his. I wish I were of the Order of Mercy, then I could go to him. I have not a doubt but that I could help



him more than your surgeon. The report of the day is, that his Excellency is retreating upon Puebla. Then he is so much nearer me, and as soon as my hero is recovered, so will he be, too. They are marching strong detachments from this city to aid the imperialists, and the patriot ranks are filling up still faster. My heart exults in the glory acquired by my beloved. But it is too expensive and purchased at too much hazard. I awake at night, and think I hear the guns they are firing upon him. In this view I could almost rejoice that he has received a wound, not dangerous, but sufficient to detain him a while from danger. You will congratulate me upon one point gained. My mother has become a patriot, and in the presence of my father expressed a decided opinion that the cause ought and would prevail. She stated at the same time that she no longer and never would be again opposed to my love, and that if I can gain my father's consent she is perfectly willing to break with the one and give me to the other. I embraced her and almost stifled her with kisses. She requested me not to caress her to death, for she wished to live and see me happy. This full confession from her has raised a domestic storm. My father seems to cling more resolutely to the ship now that it seems to be sinking. But all my omens are good. The earth seems to have caught my delight, the city clocks move faster, the birds have learned a new song, and every one seems to have entered into my joy without being conscious of it. I am sure he will yet be mine. I have always had a presentiment of it. What a sober, quiet, domestic, stay-at-home wife I should make. I could live with him on Crusoe's island without Friday. I fear that I am too happy, and dread a reverse.

Affectionately yours,

ISABEL.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## KIDNAPPED.

MEXICO, July, 1824.

DEAREST LETITIA:

I have this day received a package of your letters at once. I do not wonder at your astonishment that you have had no news from me for a long time. It is a miracle that you should ever hear from me again as an inhabitant of this earth. Oh! What have I not suffered? I have lived fifty years in a month, and I have performed, oh! such a penance for my sins. Surely I have sinned deeply. But I hope my trials have not been without their use. I am sure I am more sober; that I have acquired some practical philosophy, and that my pulse will never beat so tumultuously again. But you shall have the sad story of my sufferings. The evening after my mother came out with that decided preference for Mr. Gordon that I mentioned to you, too happy to sit still, and in a frame of mind to muse in the moonlight and inhale the delicious evening breeze, and think upon that man, I bade the duenna walk with me, and I took the direction of the lake, for we live near that extremity of the city. It was very imprudent I grant you, in these times of distraction and misrule. But I felt so happy, and I felt, too, as if I were strong in the strength of his protecting arms. We had cleared the city

and were approaching the lake before we noticed that a carriage with servants wearing the imperial uniform followed us. An apprehensive suspicion flashed across my mind, but was instantly driven out by a pleasanter train of thoughts. We continued to walk on for nearly half a league, and the duenna remarked that the carriage followed at about the same distance. A shiver of terror of some unknown danger pervaded my mind. We immediately turned our steps for the city. The carriage stopped, and I stopped, too; but not long, for a man, muffled in a cloak, and followed by two servants, made toward me. I shrieked and ran as fast as I could, but was overtaken in a moment. The stranger grasped me in his arms, and the servants caught the duenna. I sternly asked him what he wanted, for if it were my money and jewels, they were at his service. He replied that he was aware that I had not so mistaken his object; that I could guess by whom and for what purpose he was employed. Lest I should still doubt, he told me that he was ordered to convey me safely and respectfully, if I would allow him, to Puebla, there to meet my affianced husband; that he was instructed to explain so much of his object in order to allay any unfounded apprehensions, and to set my mind at ease as to my destination. That for the rest, he hoped I would enter the carriage that waited for me, cheerfully, for in that case he was charged to use his best and most respectful exertions to render the journey pleasant. But that his commands were positive, and his business urgent, admitting neither hesitation nor delay; and that his instructions were to bring me to his Excellency at Puebla, respectfully, if I would, or forcibly, if he must; and he begged me to fix upon the alternative.

I put down the coward at my heart, and talked firmly and indignantly, and told him that none but a robber would



be employed in such a purpose, or would commit such an outrage upon a man, much less upon a defenceless woman; that he might by brute force carry me to Puebla, and that I spurned equally his control and his master's; I cautioned him that the times were dubious, and that his employer might not always be in power, and that he might some time be called to account for this evening's outrage. I threatened him with the utmost vengeance of a powerful father, who would deeply avenge this detestable outrage. He replied with ironical coolness, that he had no idea of engaging in a war of words in which I was sure to have the better of the argument; and that he was happy to set my mind at rest, regarding my father's interference, and that, if I wished, he would show me a letter from him to his Excellency, in which the latter is authorized to take such measures with me as he deemed expedient, "so that the result be that you are joined together in holy wedlock."

He said that he was in great haste, and begged to know whether he should have the honor to escort, or carry me to the carriage. I told him that I was aware into whose hands I had fallen, that if he would allow my woman to accompany me, I would trust to Providence for the future. "Remember," I cried, "that I take this woman with me, and that you pledge yourself not to so much as pollute me again with the touch of your hand." "Much obliged to you, madam," said he, "you speak like Cicero. Every article of the treaty shall be observed, and I assure you that if it is broken it will be done by you." He opened the carriage door, and I sprang into it as though I were embarking on a pleasure trip. He lifted the duenna in after me, mounted himself, closed the door, gave a signal, and we were whirled away.

Words would but weakly portray my thoughts and feelings. We had hardly passed the causeway from the city,

before we were joined by a number of armed men on horseback, and among others, I recognized my father's confidential servant, which fact instantly enlightened me as to the truthfulness of what had just been told me, that my father was not only consenting to this outrage, but aiding it. We drove on in silence. I heard the distant tones of the bells dying away in the distance. Finally all faded away but the rattling of the wheels and the trampling of the horses. All hope of rescue or return was at an end.

At one in the morning we came to the mountains. The person who was with us in the coach descended, and made a motion for me to follow him. I noticed that the whole escort amounted to twenty persons. The master of the gang told me that he was obliged so far to infringe the treaty, as to inform me that we were to tarry here until the rising of the sun, and that I should be obliged to proceed the rest of the way on a mule, and that he hoped I would devote the interval to rest, for that the remainder of the journey would be fatiguing. I went into the hotel, was shown by the servant to a bed, and my duenna had one prepared by me. I reflected that I should need all my strength and composure for the scenes that were before me, and that, to make the best of my present situation, would be most likely to give me energy and endurance for whatever I might have to encounter. Accordingly, I went to bed, and dreamed that Mr. Gordon rode up, the handsomest officer I had ever seen, at the head of a fine regiment, and that at the sight of him all my persecutors shifted for themselves; and I was dreaming further, when I was awakened by the summons of my conductor. I arose, was dressed, mounted my mule, and requested them to lead on. I hoped that by apparent submission to my fate I might throw these people off their guard, and make my escape.

In this way we advanced slowly, avoiding, as I discovered, the great road, and for the most part following mule paths among the mountains, until we arrived in view of the beautiful city of Puebla. It was a lovely view, even in the deplorable situation in which I was placed. Cradled among the mountains, its air is balm, its scenery inspiring, and the blue of its atmosphere more soft than that of any place that I had ever seen. At the sight of the town my heart began to palpitate, and I was alternately faint and then my face glowed. I faintly breathed the dear name instead of that of the Virgin Mother, as though there were relief and protection in the name; the spirit of my father began to stir within me, and indignation began to inspire me with the requisite self-possession. I was left under the guard of the rest, and my conductor went forward, as I suppose, to report his progress and success. It was nearly an hour before he returned, and I had a fine opportunity to meditate how I should conduct myself in the approaching emergency. I revolved every conceivable plan of address and action, and ended by feeling the impossibility of anticipating a conduct proper for every supposable case, and determined simply to act according to circumstances.

My conductor returned, and the escort marched through various streets in the city. It halted at last in front of a splendid building, which they called the palace. I was ordered to alight, and my conductor led the way up a flight of marble stairs to a piazza, from which a door opened into a spacious hall. A lady gaily dressed, and with rather a handsome person, but of a bold and disagreeable manner, requested me to be seated. She informed me that his Excellency would have the honor to wait upon me as soon as he had finished some important business that could not be deferred. I replied, that it was a thing altogether



undesired on my part to see his Excellency, as she had called him, at all; and the longer his important business detained him, the better I should be pleased. "Indeed, madam," said she, "that is astonishing! I should have supposed that ladies were more alike in their tastes. The bravery and gallantry of our noble general has won every heart here. I am told, madam, that he has done you the infinite honor to elect you for his bride, and that with the consent of your noble father he has brought you here to celebrate the nuptials. You can scarcely imagine how much you will be envied this distinguished honor. You have only to fear that some jealous rival will mix poison with your beverage before it reaches you." I replied, "Madam, I have not the honor of knowing you, nor the taste to like you, and when you have said all that you have on your mind, I hope you will have the goodness to relieve me of the pleasure of your company." She made a low, sweeping courtesy, and said that she felt very much oppressed at heart, that she had not the good fortune to please me in the same degree as she long had my future husband; that, as to leaving the elected bride of his Excellency alone, just on her introduction to the palace, and on the eve of being united to him, was a thing not to be thought of, and that the general would never forgive her such rudeness. I smiled in her face, threw as much contempt as I could in my manner, and reclined on the sofa with the assumed ease and insolence of a high-bred lady, and made up my countenance for meeting his Excellency.

It was nearly noon when he came, and if I had not had such just cause for indignation and terror, I should have pitied the wretch, when he approached me. He had tasked himself to the utmost to assume the nonchalance and toothpick insolence of a hero, who visits a subdued

and imprisoned enemy. The moment he saw the look of defiance, his insolence forsook him. His cheek paled, and he began to stammer something about love and promises, and the consent of my father, and my recreant and degrading taste for the vile traitor, the Yankee adventurer. I heard him calmly to the end, and then I opened upon him. Our language is rich in terms of belittlement, hatred, and contempt; and I was fluent in the use of them. I told him if he had possessed at the first, a single rudiment of anything that was noble in man, his birth, fortune, and equality of condition, together with the wishes of my parents, he would undoubtedly have gained my consent to a union with him, before I had ever seen any one better. But, at the moment he persevered in his suit, propped by his interest with my parents, after he was assured that he could never have mine, he became to me, not only a subject of dislike, but of loathing; for that a man who would in any way impose himself on a woman as a husband, after he knew she disliked and wished to avoid him, must be a tyrant and a coward. I added that I did indeed love the American adventurer, as he had called him, with my whole heart, and I had thought, since I had known him, that my aversion to his Excellency had indeed increased by contrasting characters so very opposite. I hinted at his having fished him out of the water. Not to be outdone in this strain, he reminded me, that much as that adventurer wanted birth and condition, he had invited him to decide their mutual pretensions in a single combat, which he had declined. I replied by reminding him that the opportunity, so sought, did afterward occur; "and I remember," I continued, "that there were two accounts of the affair, the one by him and the other by yourself, and they materially differed; I presume you understood which one I believed." He reddened with rage,

turned on his heel, traversed the room two or three times with rapid strides, and then placing himself full before me, and summoning all his coolness, he said, "Madam, I see it is useless to contend with you in words. I shall not condescend to any further discussion. You are mine, because I have power, and love you. You are mine, because I entertain a deadly hatred toward the man you love. In the double game which you have played between him and me, you are mine by implied engagement. You are mine by your father's consent, and even assistance, as you discover. All these indignant airs only give my pretty caged bird a more engaging appearance. Make yourself comfortable and at home here. You are mistress of the palace and its master. To-morrow, or perhaps the next day, you will accompany me to a place in the mountains. Father Jerome and your father's servant will be in waiting, and your duenna on your part, to witness to earth and heaven that you are my lawful wedded wife. You will hardly attempt to show any more of these airs, when you discover that they only render you more piquant, and to my taste." He could not, however, resist the cool smile of contempt I gave him, and grinding his teeth, and half drawing his sword, he uttered a curse, that I should then be his, alive or dead.

His countenance while he was uttering these words was horrible, and I felt a sinking faintness at heart, which I disguised by turning away from him apparently in contempt. I only added, "You may, perhaps, carry me there, and my poor father may have abetted this horrid purpose. I will promise nothing beforehand. The same Providence which has so mercifully interposed for me before, will not forsake me now, in this hour of extreme need. When it comes to the worst I can only die, and the thought that I was your wife would blast me as surely as a thunder-



bolt. You have taught me what I thought was impossible, to abhor you more than ever. I hope that until that dreaded hour of removal, I am at least to be left alone to think on him who has so often delivered us both, and who little thought, when he last spared you in battle, that he was sparing a viper to sting him, and all that was dear to him, to death." He replied that if it would comfort me to have one more solitary night for such pleasing remembrances, he had promised my father that, up to the time when he should have the claims of a husband, I should be left to myself. Saying this, he withdrew.

The remainder of the day and the ensuing night passed as before, except that the lady of whom I spoke, showed herself only at supper. Early the next morning I made my way into the street, and attempted to get out of the town and escape. At first, I was exposed to the insults of the soldiers, of which the town was full. But I was soon discovered. The commander was sent for. He met me in the street, half a mile from his residence. I was wearied, frightened, and subdued, and I wept like a child. I fell on my knees before him in the street, in the presence of his brutal soldiers, and implored him by his mother, his sister, and the Blessed Virgin, to let me travel on foot and alone to Vera Cruz. "You need not go there," said he, "to see the adventurer. He is expected here every hour at the head of the rebel troops to besiege me, and my sweet bride in the palace. What a charming solace we shall have for passing the dull days of the siege!" It was in vain that I wept and implored the officers, soldiers, and citizens. The soldiers were ordered to take me by force and carry me home; and I was conveyed there as if I had been a corpse.

The dreadful hour was approaching; and I was but too well apprised of the lengths to which he was prepared

to go. I had reserved a knife which I used for preparing pens and paring my nails, for an emergency. I had always considered him a coward, and I had determined when we should be alone to operate upon his fears, by a show of assault. I searched for it, and it was gone. He was now with me alone, assuring me that he would not leave me again until the coach came to convey us to the place of marriage. I again fell on my knees before him. I folded my hands in the attitude of the most earnest supplication. I said, "Forgive me, Don De Oli. I will use no more harsh words to you. I will strive to love you, and become whatever you wish. I cannot pass at once from hatred to love. Allow me but four days, and at the end of that time——" and I hesitated. "And what at the end of four days?" asked he. "At the end of four days," I answered, "I will either become your wife, or die. Grant me this, I beseech you, by the many days which we have spent together when I did not hate you, when I believed that one day I might love you." "That, madam," said he, "will never do. You have fooled me long enough, and I see your only object is to gain time, until the Yankee can come to your relief. 'The present time,' the proverb says, 'is the only time.' I must avail myself of it." While this was passing, the carriage which was to convey us away, drove to the door. The hateful woman appeared to accompany me. I remember nothing further, except a certain swimming of the head, and that the room and every object was inverted, and whirled around. I did not awake to consciousness until after midnight. The faithful duenna was weeping by my side. A physician and a priest were in the apartment. Don De Oli came to my bedside and they came with him. I felt tranquil, but so extremely weak as hardly to be able to articulate. I heard the physician inform him, that

in my present situation, the least motion or alarm would be fatal to me. I felt my strength and my powers returning with my consciousness, and was sensible that my faintness had been that of extreme terror. But I carefully imitated, as well as I could, the symptoms which had been so recently real. I had the inexpressible satisfaction to find that the physician was deceived by this counterfeiting, and advised him to leave me to repose, of which I feebly expressed my need. Two servants were left with candles in the remote part of the room, and the faithful duenna sat by my side. You may be sure I had no thoughts of repose. Not many minutes after the wretch left me, I saw through the blinds the flash, and instantly afterward heard the report of a cannon, and a continued and terrific shouting of voices. Shortly after a person came into the room and uttered something in a whisper. The attendant women cried out "Jesu, Maria!" and began to wring their hands. "We are besieged," they cried. "The North American general besieges us. Oh! The horrid creature! He spares neither aged nor infant, lay woman, nor professed;" and they crossed and comforted themselves with a prayer that the general might beat them off. How tumultuously my bosom throbbed! The cannon pealed again and again, and every discharge seemed in my ear the noble voice of my deliverer announcing to me that relief was at hand.

My tormentor came and went, and deep anxiety sat upon his face. I made it a point to lie perfectly still in bed, and my entire abstinence from all refreshments for some time had given me the paleness of death. The second day of my confinement in this way, I heard a louder and more continuous cannonade, the crash of small arms, and the infuriated shouts of the assailants, and sometimes the shrieks of the besieged. The attendants



came into the room on tip-toe; their countenances evinced that their terrors were real, and not the offspring of idle speculation. I made the best interpretation I could of the broken exclamations and whispers, and I inferred that Don De Oli had made a sortie from the town; that it had been routed and driven back, and that there was hourly danger that the town would be taken.

I feigned sleep, and the anxiety and terror of my attendants were so great that they left me alone with the duenna. My pocketbook had not been taken from me. In it was paper and a pencil. I traced on a slip of paper these words: "I am here under the control of Don De Oli. Save me from a fate worse than death——"

I gave this scrawl to the duenna with every precaution to enable her to have it conveyed to Mr. Gordon. I furnished her with money, and told her that my life depended upon that billet finding its way to him. She promised her best, and retired; after a sufficient time she came back with a satisfied countenance, informing me that she had hired an Indian for five doubloons, who had promised on the sign of the cross to have it conveyed to the patriot general.

The next day Don De Oli returned, and I discovered in extreme anger. The duenna had learned that the garrison had been severely beaten, and that it was the general impression that the town could hold out but a few days. I might have attributed his anger to this, but he soon undeceived me. "So," said he, "all this sinking faintness is a mere stratagem of war. I am astonished, that such a beautiful and innocent face can conceal so much intrigue and deception. See, traitress, that there are others as wise as yourself. That infernal rebel may learn that you are here, and be urged to save you from an event so much

more terrible than death. But the information, you see, has to pass through my hands, and I must immediately possess the rights of a husband, to enable me to rightly dispose of your billet. There is some probability that the rebel may render it expedient for us to evacuate the town, and retreat to a place more central to our resources. But we must be wedded before we leave this place. You will prepare yourself in a couple of hours for a visit from the father confessor, who will solemnize the marriage. It is a fortunate contingency that he arrived yesterday with dispatches from the Emperor, and has consented to perform this service for us. I recommend to you the same wisdom which you showed in your journey here. You will have to submit, and I wish it were cheerfully, to the unavoidable necessity of your condition. Trick, faint, deception will neither create surprise, inspire pity, nor obtain delay." Saying this, he put the billet, which I had sent Mr. Gordon, before me, and retired.

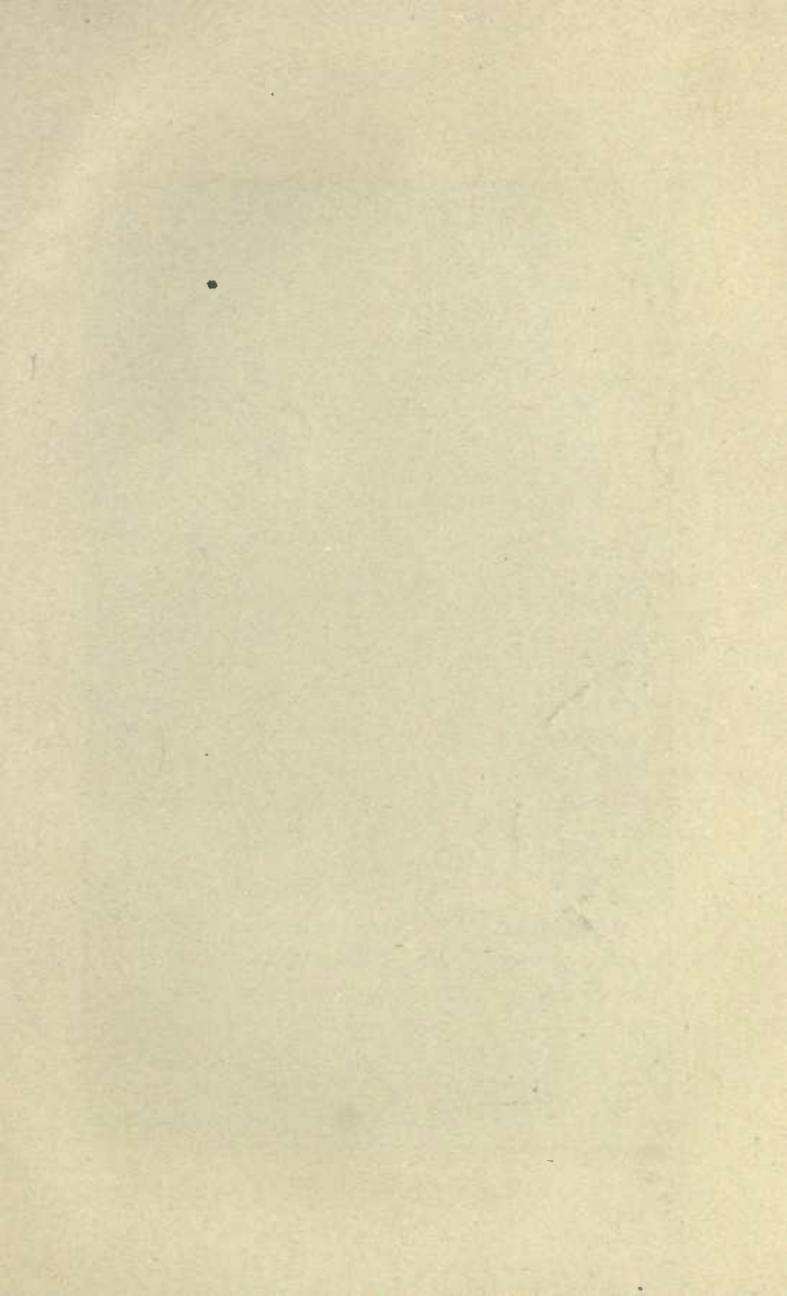
I threw my arms around the neck of my only friend, and was relieved by a burst of tears. She assisted me to throw on my dress. I arose, summoned all my aid to keep cool, and seize the proper moment and course of action. One thing was determined, that Don De Oli should never be able to call me his wife. I seemed nerved to any point of daring. Nevertheless, when I heard the ascending footsteps of the expected party, my heart began to palpitate, my respiration became laborious, and the apartment, as before, began to whirl around. I was again unconscious for some time. The terror of the parties when I began to recover, evinced that they were aware that there had been no deception in this fainting. There were in the apartment the woman whom I first saw on entering the house, some other women dressed in tawdry finery, that might be servants, my father's head servant,

the father Jerome, and Don De Oli. The duenna hung over me sobbing and holding volatile salts for me to smell, and rubbing my temples with the same. Don De Oli approached me and essayed to take my hand. The touch instantly thrilled through my frame, and restored to me all my native energy. I arose, put by his hand, and passed him, toward the father. "Father," said I, "I have not thought well of you for a long time. You have now a chance to redeem my good opinion, and forever ensure my gratitude. You have seen how suddenly things change here. To serve me now, may be one day of service to you. What is this horrible farce that you are about to enact? You, a minister of the altar, and abet this horrible business! Marriage is a sacrament. There is no union unless both parties consent. Could you conjure a fiend here from his infernal abode, I would wed him as soon as that man. I might at least respect the intellectual powers of the horrible being. Think you, that Heaven will permit such horrible sacrilege as you appear to meditate, to pass unpunished? Why kill the child of your benefactor, that never did you harm? You cannot doubt, after what you have seen, that such a union would kill me at once. I beg you by the love of your mother, your sister, the Blessed Virgin, Jesus who hung on the tree, by the God of whose mysteries you are the minister, let alone this impious mockery. Refuse to have part or lot in it. Interpose your high authority as the minister of God to reprove and disappoint this wretch."

I pronounced these words in the tone of the most impassioned supplication, and held fast to his pontifical robe. He turned deadly pale, and evidently faltered in his purpose. The greater spirit was evidently subservient to the less, for Don De Oli, in a tone of authority, informed him that all was ready; and bade him proceed in the cere-



mony. He reminded him of his given word, the consent of my father, and intimated surprise, that so wise a man could hesitate in so just a resolution from the tragic rant of a girl whose head had been turned, and whose heart had been polluted by heresy. This was touching the keynote, and instantly restored to him his inflexibility of purpose. He began in that deep and awful tone of voice, in which I had so often heard him in my father's house. His eye was cast up to heaven, and his word seemed to come from the bottom of his heart. "Yea," said he, "it is a sacrament, that has been too long deferred. I plead guilty before God and the saints, that when in former times I have been urged by your father to this same course, I have yielded to the emotions of a weak and sinful compassion. It is easy to see how deeply and fatally that arch heretic has exerted his influence upon you. In solemnizing this marriage, I unite you with your equal in birth and fortune, a husband destined for you from your earliest years, and with whom you played as such in the innocent days of your childhood. In doing it, I secure your temporal happiness against your own perverted heart and judgment. And more than all, it is to purify your soul from the taint of heresy, and to secure your eternal salvation, that I commence these holy mysteries." Saying this, he began the usual services of the church, commanding me the while in the name of God, to take Don De Oli by the hand. I indignantly pushed aside the offered hand, and continued in a tone of remonstrance, and in a voice so frantic and loud, that it prevailed over the deep voice of the father's services. I could hardly make out that he had proceeded to that point of the ceremony, where our mutual responses would have been necessary to proper validity, when I sprang, by a strong effort, from the two women, who, under the semblance of bridesmaids, actually





MY TORMENTOR FLED.



held me in my position, and in struggling to open the door and escape I fainted and fell to the floor. My agony of head and heart was too intense, to allow me long the repose of fainting, and I quickly recovered consciousness. A burst of cannon and small arms was heard, followed by shouts and shrieks, and all the wild outcry of a captured city. Father Jerome fled in one direction, my infamous persecutor in another, and the next moment I was in the arms of Mr. Gordon. My appearance was a sufficient comment on the duenna's narrative. He hung over me with the tenderness of a mother. His clothes and sword were stained with blood. The story of my sufferings melted the young warrior to tears, which I could have kissed away as they formed in his eye. "Dearest Isabel," said he, "let me wash away these stains. You see I am polluted with blood." But I clung to him as if the horrors from which I had just escaped were still impending. Officers were every moment calling upon him for orders, and everything abroad was in the confusion of a city recently captured. I saw that he wished to be abroad and with me at the same time. "Oh! leave me not," said I, "for you cannot imagine the misery from which you have saved me. The victim you have so often rescued from destruction is now yours, and yours forever."

While I was thus clinging to him, and weeping on his bosom for joy, and the duenna devouring his disengaged hand with kisses, the shrieks and exclamations in our vicinity gave a terrible evidence of the lawless outrages of an infuriated soldiery in a captured city. He made a great effort of self-conquest, placed a guard of his countrymen about me, and tore himself from my grasp, saying, that delightful as it was, to spend these moments of deliverance and joy with me, the highest of all duties

called him away from selfish enjoyment, and that ne must prevent the indiscriminate massacre of the citizens. "Dear Isabel," said he, "compose and assure yourself. You have nothing to fear. I will restore order and stay the fury of the soldiers, and then return on the wings of love and impatience." "Yes," answered I, "you cannot escape me so easily. I have suffered the terror of distraction too long to forego the assurance of your protection for a moment. Where you go, I will go." Another general burst of shrieks came upon our ears. I looked into his face, and my own sense of duty returned. I relinquished his arm. "Go," said I, "restrain those wretches. Be to others what you have been to me. God forbid that I should turn the current of your humanity and protection from other unfortunates."

The moment he left me a shiver of terror ran through my frame, as though the recent horrors, from which he had delivered me, were about to press on me again. My guard was commanded by a young American officer of noble appearance, who did everything to restore my courage, assuring me that my persecutor was gone with all his train, and that I was in no danger. Notwithstanding these assurances, the hour of his absence seemed to me an age. In an hour he returned in a superb uniform. All stains of blood had disappeared, he had the firm and tranquil port of command, the eye and manner of one who had so lately guided the storm, had restored tranquillity and confidence to the trembling citizens, and tied up the unbridled fury of his soldiers. "Order and quiet," said he, "are now re-established, and the two coming hours, my dear Isabel, are wholly to you. The Imperialists have left us in quiet possession of the city, and we shall remain here for the present. How little did I expect this excessive joy!" All who were present,

except the duenna and Fergus, whose fresh Irish face sparkled with joy, were told that we preferred to be alone.

When all had retired but those before whom I felt no restraint, Mr. Gordon informed me that Fergus, who acted as aide, and who was always by his side, brought him intelligence only this morning, how I was situated. "We had determined on the assault to-morrow," said he. "This information anticipated the fate of the place one day. I gave instant orders for the assault. It was a fierce and bloody struggle. But the Imperialists fought without a commander, and, of course, much of their effort was wasted, because directed to no given object. I arrived here, it appears, at the fortunate moment. For, though such a constrained and abominable union ought never to have bound your duty or conscience for a moment, I am perfectly sensible that I have delivered you from painful scruples, and I am most happy in thinking that Don De Oli has not the miserable satisfaction of saying that the forms of this outrage were consummated." He gave me various other details of his short campaign, and taking my hand and looking timidly in my face, he asked, "Dearest Isabel, what now? I am made a kind of fair weather and guerilla general. The shortlived imperial pageant is crumbling to ruins. Don De Oli will fall with his master. I cannot but flatter myself, that whatever order of things shall arise upon these ruins, I shall have enough influence and consideration to secure your father's estate from confiscation. What shall I say further, Isabel? You know my heart too well to need any more declarations. I am perfectly sensible of the inequality between us in many points. But I feel as if I had claims. I am a general, dear Isabel, at your service, and just at this moment I am in great authority. Are you disposed forever to renounce Don De Oli, and titles and hereditary



honors, and become the wife of a simple citizen of the United States?" "Yes," said I, "provided only, that the solemnity be consecrated with the rites of my mother's church, and in the presence of my dear mother, who has given her full and unqualified consent, you can take the Doña Isabel de Olmedo for your true and wedded wife whenever you choose. To be your wife, and a citizen of the United States, fills all my present desires."

You may suppose he said kind things. He is one of those men, who show to most advantage when contemplated nearest at hand. It is true he looked none the worse for his epaulets, and for having fought like a hero. I hope you will do me the justice to believe, that though a woman, I am not precisely the person to admire a mere pageant, or allow my eyes to be caught by a fine person, a sword, and lace. How simple and how dignified is this man in private! The man who had just driven the legions of the enemy before him, and who came to me fresh from the slaughter of an assaulted city, took the hands of a simple girl who threw herself into his arms. I shall never love or respect him less for intimate acquaintance. I despise the maxim that no one is great when you see him in private.

Fergus talks Irish, and capers for pure joy, for I have told him that neither of us are ever to leave his master; and I have promised that he shall have a shanty built to his own notion, either at Durango, or in the States. For we have already agreed, after the event, to live half of the year in his country, and the other half in mine. We are thus to migrate with the birds. In the spring we will fly to the North, and in the autumn return to the South. Affectionately yours,

ISABEL.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## UNITED AT LAST.

MEXICO, August, 1824.

DEAREST LETITIA:

I am too happy to write to any one but you. I left myself at the close of my last, along with my general, at Puebla. Instead of two hours which he had promised me, he stayed until late at night. Before he left me, he arranged the terms by which I might stay at the Carmelite Convent in that city, as long as he occupied it with his troops. Protestant and heretic as they held him, he has present power, and I fear that is the divinity most devoutly worshiped here. He promised the sisterhood protection. He stationed a guard about the walls, and was to be admitted at any time that he wished. They were to afford me shelter and a home until he should carry me back to Mexico. The convent is in a sweet place, and to it I was escorted by the youthful general and a select body of troops.

In the morning he informed me that volunteers were crowding to his standard, and that three thousand had already joined him here. He told me that he was impatient to see my mother, and that he intended to leave a garrison, commanded by an officer upon whom he could depend, and pursue Don De Oli to Mexico, whither he was retreat-

ing. I replied that I was happy here, and begged him to allow me a little repose, assuring him that if he had the regard which he pretended for me, he would not leave a place where I was so delightfully situated, and where he could see me without molestation or suspicion. I reminded him now different all this might be elsewhere. "Not at all," he replied. "They shall never take you from me again. Besides, this is a cause in which every consideration must yield to the requirements of its interests. And I have a confident hope, when I have seen your mother, that we shall find a place there that will content you as well as this." I could not but admire the patriotism and self-control that led him to pursue his duty against his inclinations. I have not a doubt that he prefers me to all the pomp and circumstances of war and glory. I told him to do as his sense of duty dictated, that I was too good a patriot to wish to have him sacrifice the interest of the country for love, and that I had enjoyed one day and night beyond the reach of fortune.

He had to make a march with a select body of troops to a village, which required his absence until the next morning. I shed childish tears at this information, and held his arm, until he gently disengaged himself. To excuse me, remember what I had recently suffered. I followed him as he rode slowly away, until his figure, the waving plumes of his cap, and the troops, were lost in the distance. What a dreadful thought, that we must be separated from those we love, not by such absences, terrible as they are, which leave us the confident hope of return; but to be separated by the grave, and have the veil of eternity interposed between us and them! Oh! to be separated from him forever! the thought is chilling. I am in thought weaving the ties of a relation with the



earth, too tender. Why was the heart formed capable of such intense attachments, and yet to moulder in the dust? And then, what say the rigor of my mother church about the soul of him I so dearly love? They term him a heretic. Robert Gordon, my beloved, whose every thought is noble, whose impulses are all mercy and kindness, and whose heart is consecrated to purity and virtue, a heretic! And the sly, cruel, selfish, intriguing father Jerome, one of the faithful, and a minister of our mysteries! Letitia, I remember that you were formerly more liberal than myself, and that you used to say that a good heretic was better than a bad Catholic. If he is a heretic, I am in a fair way to become one, too. Holy Virgin defend him! Keep him from the assassin's dagger, and the sword of the enemy, and may no image of earth, but that of Isabel, mingle with his pure dreams.

I am most truly yours,

ISABEL.

MEXICO, August, 1824.

DEAREST LETITIA:

He returned the next day in safety to Puebla. Don De Oli was too far in advance of him to be overtaken. He immediately selected a garrison and appointed a commander for the city. He had news from Santa Anna, who had captured Queretaro. Having settled his arrangements for leaving the city, he spent the remainder of the day with me. The next morning he started with his whole force, except the garrison, for Mexico. It was a cheering sight, and I think intended as a kind of *fête* for me. The troops appeared to be in their gayest attire and in high spirits. They filed off in front of the convent gate. The piazza of the convent was filled with all the gaiety and beauty of the city. My general rode a spirited white charger, and many an encomium did the ladies pass

upon him, little knowing how my heart concurred in all their praises. They all admitted that he was the finest looking man they had ever seen. This with ladies is no small praise. As he came up in front and doffed his military cap and waved his plumes, there was a corresponding waving of handkerchiefs, and fair hands, and a general shout of *Viva la Republica*, and *Viva el Captain Liberador*. He dismounted and came up to the gate, kissed the hand of the prioress and other religious sisters, and asked their prayers for the success of his cause. The prioress presented him with a consecrated handkerchief, which he received with a respectful address, and what surprised them most, was not his uncommon beauty of form and person, nor his gallant and dignified bearing as an officer, but that he bowed like a king, spoke the true Castilian, and kissed the hand of the prioress, like a devout Catholic. I confessed that a little pride mixed with the love of my heart, when he came to me in the presence of such a concourse, and begged the honor of escorting me to Mexico, and my mother.

To this request I bowed like an awkward country girl, and could not find a word of reply. My heart said, "Yea and Amen! To Mexico, and as much farther as you choose." Ten of the first officers and select troops formed parallel lines. He led me through them, his cap in hand; theirs were instantly doffed as he passed, and they drew their swords in sign of offering me protection. The moment we were beyond the gate, a beautiful horse, apparently matched to that of the general, was brought me, and another for the duenna. He gracefully assisted me into the saddle. The moment I was seated the cannon fired. The bells struck, and the colors were displayed on the towers in the city. Peal after peal responded from the town. The drums rolled. The piercing notes of the fife

were heard. The shouts were re-echoed from the hills. Then there was a momentary interval of silence again. It was broken by renewed peals of cannon, and the army, the citizens, and the spectators from the towers and roofs of the city, rent the air with *Viva el Capitan Liberador*. This was repeated a number of times. Instantly all was still. The hats were replaced. The general uttered the word "March!" and a full band struck up a national air. Our horses moved off at a slow and measured pace. We were all mounted, and the trampling of so many thousand horses produced a sound which I cannot describe. How delightful was this journey! How different from the sullen and desponding train of thoughts in which I came here! Letitia, you came over the sea with the beloved of your heart, and had that long and intimate sojourn with your husband. But it seems to me that I cannot be happier than I am. I would be content, at any rate, to compromise with destiny, and always remain as I am. I can pretend to convey no idea of his assiduity, tenderness, and gallantry. Not a word, not a look, apparently not a thought escapes him, but what unites the expression of devoted affection with that of vestal purity. Every hour and every day of this charming journey was a succession of new enjoyments. At last we arrived in view of this valley, which unites everything that is grand, rich, or beautiful in nature and art. It awoke me from my long trance of enjoyment. I remembered that this great city, so difficult to approach, and so hard to attack with any prospect of success, was in possession of the Emperor and his troops, commanded by a wretch whose hatred toward the chosen of my heart would now be tenfold more rancorous and vindictive than ever. And what will my father say to the present order of things? Of my mother I have no doubt. Mr. Gordon approached me. "Yonder,"



said he, "are the towers of Mexico. My heart swells at the sight, for I have a presentiment that I shall soon call you mine, and that the patriot flag will soon wave from their pinnacles."

When we arrived at the city, Mr. Gordon joined his troops to those of Santa Anna and Eschaverri. There was in the united army a party, and not a weak one, disposed to assign the chief command to the American general. But he concluded that it would be better to the cause, and to the interest of my father, for him to take a subordinate command. There was some question between Eschaverri and Santa Anna. It was peaceably settled that the latter should have the supreme command, and the other two co-ordinate authority. When I saw them running to my beloved in every difficulty, I saw that he who originated all the measures, was the chief commander, whatever name he bore. In the hour of perplexity and danger, Mr. Gordon, without the envy or responsibility of the chief command, really originated every measure, and his counsels prevailed upon every point in question.

It was a proud and glorious sight, and every measure was taken with the most perfect union of feeling. The artillery pealed. The drums rolled. The banners waved. The troops displayed, and the cries of *Viva la Republique* arose to the sky. Even the horses caught the pride and enthusiasm of the moment.

*In continuation.*

Jesu Maria! I have been an hour on my knees in thanksgiving, and yet I have not returned adequate thanks. All doubt is over. They have passed the dreaded act of confiscation. What do I care? I should be as happy as mortal can be, if I had to earn my daily bread by toil. I will not attempt to describe the scene that I have just

witnessed. What a scene! My father and mother have arrived in camp. My father was no longer the proud, nobleman, the heir of thirty generations. It was a proscribed father, stripped of all his honors, and all his wealth, his house converted into quarters for soldiers, and himself and my mother obliged to fly for their lives without a servant. It was so much the more bitter, that all this cruelty was inflicted by one for whom my father would have sacrificed me and everything. The order of nature was reversed, and instead of allowing me to fall on my knees, to ask his pardon for my disobedience, he would have humbled himself before me, and begged forgiveness of me with the subdued humiliation of one whose pride and heart had both been broken. "God," said he, "has punished me just in the point where I had offended. He has made the Moloch, to whom I would have offered up my dear and only daughter, the instrument of my correction. Old, infirm, a beggar, I would beg pardon of Mr. Gordon on my knees." I threw myself into his aged arms, and wept on his bosom. "My dear venerated father," I cried, "I well know that mistaken love for me dictated all that you have done. It is all forgiven and forgotten. I can now show you the extent of my love and duty. I will make you feel and acknowledge that wealth is not necessary to happiness. What do I say? He will overthrow their acts of iniquity, and restore you to your wealth and honors." "That cannot be, dear daughter," he mournfully replied. "I have committed myself with all parties; and whichever of them that ultimately prevails, the insolence of success, and the rancor of the triumphant party will effectually bar me from my possessions. I shall never dare to look Mr. Gordon in the face." My mother embraced me in her

turn, and in our tears there was no bitterness; for we always had but one mind upon this subject.

My father said that Don De Oli and the father confessor, after returning in disgrace and chagrin, related their reverses to the Emperor, but never went near him. He immediately procured a decree of confiscation, which was no sooner passed, than put in execution. He had scarcely time given him to allow him to fly, and was proscribed as a traitor. My mother fled with him, and they had remained concealed among the adherents of our house. As soon as they heard of our arrival they came to us. I received my father and mother in my own tent, where they embraced the duenna, the only servant that now remained to them. I left them with her and went to Mr. Gordon, who was engaged in reading overtures from the Emperor. On our way back I prepared him for the scene that was to follow. He soon put my father at his ease by a deportment just such as I could have wished from him. His manner showed that he estimated my mother differently from my father, but that he now saw nothing in him but the humble father of Isabel. He begged him to believe that the future should entirely obliterate the past. He pressed the offered cheek of my mother with his lips, and embraced her. "You have always been as a son to me," said she, "and if you now wish it, you shall be really so." My father added, "that matters were so changed that Mr. Gordon would hardly desire a union with a poor, unfortunate girl, who had nothing to bring but herself and her helpless parents." "That," said he, "is all I ever sought. Present the next woman on earth with one of the Indies in each hand for a dower, and your daughter penniless, and I would not hesitate a moment. But suppose she will be so? Not for my sake, or hers, but for yours, and the comfort of your age, we will have all



these puppet acts of confiscation reversed. I will yield in everything else, but not this; my heart tells me that I ought to stand; and were there but my single sword, I would not sheathe it until that was obtained."

My father embraced him with tears and exclaimed, "Why have cruel circumstances ever alienated me from this noble young man, whose title is worth a thousand times all those written on parchment? Success is in your eye and follows your steps. Forgive the ingratitude of a doting old man, and take, if you desire it, all that I now have to give, my daughter. I see that you love each other. I know that he is the soul of honor and will be kind to you when I am gone. I give up ambition, and only hope to spend my old days peacefully with you and to expire in your arms. The angel of the covenant bless you!" My mother likewise gave us full consent and implored blessings on our heads.

How often have I said and thought that my happiness could receive no addition since I had been rescued from the hands of Don De Oli. But when I saw my parents looking with affection and undoubting confidence to Mr. Gordon, my betrothed, I felt that I could be happier than I had yet been. In the course of the conversation the question came up when I should become the wife of the Yankee general, and my parents said the sooner the more agreeable to them; and they looked to me to set the time, and I said that the general had won me so often that I thought he should have the right of war and conquest. Then we all looked to him to name the day. And what do you think the cruel man said? Why, that he was probably the most impatient of all, but that he had made a vow that he would not ask so great an honor until he could render himself in some way worthy of it, by procuring a reversal of the decree of confiscation, and a res-

toration of my father to his home and his honors. My father and mother exchanged looks, as much as to say, "Such is our son-in-law." There was another comfort, too, in the new order of things. My father and mother agreed that the name of Don De Oli was as hateful to them as it was to me. Moreover, we could see each other as often as we pleased. In fact, he lives almost in my tent.

I confess I am impatient with the tedious progress of these negotiations. The cities and provinces are all leaving the standard of the Emperor, and my father's countenance brightens daily, for he, too, has become a patriot. The Emperor has made the patriot general proposals, and the papers are all brought to my future husband. How everlastingly tedious are these miserable politicians; they will spin out the simplest trifle to a volume. It is a hard thing to keep these stupid generals from quarreling among themselves. My general is constantly throwing water on their fire. Santa Anna confessed to my father to-day that if it were not for Mr. Gordon they would all fall together and the cause would be lost.

Yours as ever,

ISABEL.

MEXICO, August, 1824.

DEAREST LETITIA:

Blessed be the Holy Virgin! Mexico is ours. I am under my father's roof. The confiscation is reversed. Mr. Gordon this morning brought my father a decree of the National Junta, which reverses all the late decrees of Iturbide, and restores my father to all his fortunes, to his recent command at Durango, and to the presidency of that honorable body. He, Victoria and the Conde De Alva may now be considered as at the head of affairs. The day of days is fixed. My father throws me gold by the

handful, and my poor head swims with joy. Clara wishes me joy with the best possible grace.

I ought to go back and inform you how these great events came about. Day before yesterday Iturbide sent out to the patriot general a full abdication of his assumed power and immediately retired to his country home. Don De Oli and the father confessor wished to fly with him. But they were arrested by some of my father's friends, both were lodged in jail, and their fate will probably depend on my father's will. Immediately upon the abdication, a junta formed a provisional government, and called a National Congress. They are ready to wink at one great deficiency in Mr. Gordon, his not being a Catholic. They offered him a command only subordinate to the commander-in-chief. But equally in compliance with his own feelings and my wishes, and those of my father, he declined it. He said that he had not taken up arms for himself, but for the cause of man, and that having seen the nation restored to the full possession of its liberties, and not having the honor of being a native of the country, he wished to tender his resignation.

I was in the gallery with a crowd of the citizens when he made his speech to congress. It was delivered with that noble simplicity which characterizes everything he does. My father presided at the meeting. A majority of the members were his followers and his speech was received with the loudest applause, every one extolling the rare example of a victorious general resigning his command to the peaceful representatives of the people. A pension for life and an extensive and beautiful estate in the valley of Mexico were voted him and he retired amidst the acclamations and waving of handkerchiefs from the galleries. The day of days is the day after to-morrow. We are all sick of revolutions, war and the shedding of blood.



As soon as the spring opens we journey together to the United States, to visit the place of his birth. I have studied no people or manners but Spanish, and I long to see and study that great, peaceful and flourishing country.

Don De Oli and the father confessor were this day brought from prison and placed before the junta. They had the meanness to most earnestly supplicate the interference of Mr. Gordon, and attempted to cajole him with eulogies upon his magnanimity. My father said that the junta, in disposing of them, would be guided by his wishes. He instantly expressed a wish that they might be liberated on the expressed condition that he should never see them again. They were set at large. Unhappy men! Retributive justice overtook them. This capital is in a state of the most terrible anarchy. In too many instances have the miserable people taken justice into their own hands. It is true that sometimes they let their wrath fall on the right ones. These bad men had become obnoxious to the people, and as they were liberated at the gate of the palace where the junta was in session some one gave the signal for marking them out for the fury of the mob. They were literally torn to pieces. I tremble yet, and pity them, much as they deserved their fate.

Sincerely yours,

ISABEL

MEXICO, Sept., 1824.

DEAREST LETTIE:

This evening is to see me no longer Doña de Olmedo. My hand trembles, and if my writing is a little flurried, I hope you will pardon me. Let me tell you something of these important arrangements. We are to be publicly married in the church Señora de Guadeloupe, by the Bishop of Mexico. Clara is to be bridesmaid. There is to be a general illumination. Immediately after we return

to my father's house, Fergus is to be married to a pretty Irish girl, and my duenna to Matteo Tonato, the whole to conclude with a splendid fandango.

I had almost forgotten the most important article, my dress. The good man has been a little prying in this, and I have answered him, "You shall see, sir, all in good time, and I shall not look ugly either." To tell you the truth, he is not fond of jewels, or I would blaze like the meridian sun. I have had many counsels on this subject. My mother advises gorgeous, flowered and stiff silks. Clara would have me flash with diamonds. I will surprise him more than that. It is a plain, rich cambric dress from the United States, made by an accomplished mantua-maker after the latest fashion of that country. The compliment will be so much the more delicate, as he supposes that I am to appear in a rich Spanish costume studded with jewels. He wears his uniform as a patriot general.

*In continuation.*

It is all over. I will give you the details in their order. Just as the sun was setting, my mother and Clara, and two other distinguished young ladies of the city, were assisted by the bridegroom into the state coach. Thirty coaches of invited guests followed. The whole was escorted by a select body of troops, lately under the command of my husband. At the head of the procession was my father accompanied by the Conde de Alva and the first officers of the junta. Military music, firing of cannon and the ringing of bells marked the commencement of the procession. At the door of the magnificent church we were received by the bishop and the priesthood of the city, all in their most solemn official robes. The church was full to overflowing, and adorned with evergreens, and covered quite to the centre of its vaulted dome with that profusion of splendid flowers in which our city abounds.

After the ceremony we all returned to my father's residence. You know all about our customs on such occasions. My father is scrupulously observant of all the Spanish rules of the olden times. I have only to say that every punctilio was observed on this occasion. The pleasantest circumstance is yet to be recorded. The Gazette, in detailing the festivities of the night, remarked that not a single accident had occurred.

To my great relief we were entirely alone in the morning. I dreaded to see company, and would have chosen to spend the day alone with my husband. But immediately after breakfast the Conde's coach drove up and a card was handed me from Clara, requesting the pleasure of a drive with me and my husband. The drive was a pleasant one. We visited all the important churches of the city. The architecture, furniture and paintings impressed my husband very much. I have seen the same expression on his countenance when he was viewing the mountains of San Puebla, and other sublime points of our scenery.

After we had finished the inspection of the churches, we took seats in a garden, from which was a most sublime view of the whole chain of mountains in the distance. In one of the churches which we had visited, we had waited through a most imposing celebration of high mass, in which the rites of our church had appeared in all their grandeur. "We have seen all that our city has to boast of," said Clara, "and now I wish to ask your opinion, and, if I did not respect that opinion, I would not ask it. You have been reared religiously, as a Protestant, or, as we say, a heretic. You have seen all that is noble and imposing in our worship. Which worship do you prefer, this or your own?" He answered: "I can hardly reply to you, without making a speech, and I am too happy to punish you, or myself, by such an affliction. The whole taken



together, if I must be frank, I much prefer my own. Could I have done it without a compromise of principles, my interest and inclination would have led me to accept your faith. I have felt the full force of a motive, a thousand times more powerful in swaying the springs of action, when I have seen Isabel raising her eyes and folding her hands with such an expression of ardor and purity in her prayers and observances. I have painfully regretted that we were not exactly one in faith, as I trust we are in affection. It is my opinion that religion is the most solemn of all realities, not at all dependent upon forms or shades of opinion. I believe all good people to be of one religion. I admire most of the forms of your worship, as I said to the unfortunate father Jerome. I am well convinced that the ignorant multitude of such a country as this can have no faith but an implicit one. Were it not for a few points to which your priests hold with such perseverance, I could be a conscientious Catholic. Some of the dogmas of your church are not only incredible and impossible, but revolting to common sense. I am disgusted with the multitude of bowings, crossings, shifting of dress, the gaudiness and finery of the sacerdotal costume; in short, a great part of the parade and pageantry of your church. How simple are all the grand operations of the deity! Can the Being who reared yonder mountains, and kindled the eternal fires under their snows, and who melts the snows of half the world by an influence so silent and unostentatious as the gentle action of the sun, can that Being be pleased by a pageantry so shiftless and tinsel? Excuse me for talking so plainly. I am aware how sacred all your customs must be. But I have seen so much of profession in all forms without reality, that I think very little of the external forms of any religion. It is the substance of the thing, and the being in earnest which I

respect. Of the place where Isabel shall worship I shall always think, in the phrase of the Bible, 'Put off the shoes from off thy feet, for the place where she standeth is holy ground.' Far from loving her the less, for the difference of opinion between us, the honor of our different faiths, I trust, will operate upon both, to strive to evince which faith will inspire the most tenderness, forbearance and fidelity. All the hope I entertain of converting her, and all the arts I mean to try, will be founded on the purpose to show her what a kind, correct and undeviating husband a Protestant can be." What say you, Letitia? If the respective excellence of our faiths be put upon this criterion, I am fully aware that his will vanquish mine, and that I shall end by becoming a heretic.

As ever,

ISABEL.

MEXICO, Sept., 1824.

DEAREST LETITIA:

I have received your kind letter and the beautiful rosary accompanying it. I thank you a thousand times for your kind wishes. I have no apprehension on the score to which you warn me. I have no fears of the weather getting duller after the honeymoon is over. I only fear that this more intimate view will inspire idolatry, and that I shall be too much tempted to surrender my judgment and reasoning to another. When I loved him at a distance, I knew but the half of his deserts. You must see the manner, and the motive, that he carries with him to the sanctuary of our privacy; you must walk and ride with him, as I do; you must catch his eye as we scramble together up the mountains, or listen to his conversation as we sail together on these sweet lakes; in short, you must find him, as I do, most full and rich and delightful in that dear spot, our home, to do full justice to his character. Let the stoics preach that this life never does or can yield anything but

satiety and disappointment. I know better by experience. I could live happily for a whole year on the treasured recollection of the past few days. I have experienced more enjoyment in a day since marriage than in all my life before.

The only news of any importance, you have undoubtedly heard, that the ex-Emperor has sailed with his whole family for Italy, or, as it is generally believed, for England. We have made most of our arrangements and will start in a few days for Durango. We are all impatient to be more private than we can be here. Balls and visiting occupy too much of our time. I want the shade of those venerable sycamores and catalpas. I know of no one that I shall very much regret leaving, but the Conde's family, particularly his daughter. Indeed, she talks of accompanying us. I am sure she would if she could gain the consent of her father.

I am lovingly yours,

ISABEL.

DURANGO, October, 1824.

DEAREST LETITIA:-

I am so delighted with the regularity of your correspondence, and my conscience tells me it is a duty to write to you so long as you feel any desire to hear from me.

Before we left the city, as it was very uncertain when we would return to it, we visited the estate in the valley granted to my husband by the junta. We found it to be a fine estate, though it had gone to waste from the troubles of the times. I felt a great pleasure in being here from the fact that it belonged to him. After we had put everything in order for the improvement of the place, we returned to the city and visited all places of interest. After this we visited Guanajuato, Queretaro, and, in fact, most of the principal towns of a country so delightful in climate, so



grand in scenery, so inexhaustible in resources, and yet, as my husband says, abounding in misery, want, and ignorance, swarming with beggars famishing amidst the exuberance of nature, merely from the blighting influence of oppression.

The government of the patriots is constantly acquiring strength. The peaceful labors of agriculture are resumed. The people look cheerful and full of hope. The mines are beginning to be worked again. My husband's and my father's estates are beginning to render us their accustomed revenues.

Nothing could exceed the joy of all the persons of our establishment when it was announced to them that we were ready to set out for Durango. We all long for the repose of that place. Our whole cavalcade numbered about fifty people, and when we alighted at a *hacienda* we devoured all that was eatable about the establishment; but unlike all that the people had been used to during the late times of anarchy and trouble, we remembered to pay them well. I am surprised to see how soon, now that all impediments are removed, my father has become deeply attached to his son-in-law. While he imagines that he does everything of his own will, in fact he does nothing without the counsels of Mr. Gordon. Would you believe it, my father has got his grammar and dictionary, and has set down to learn English. I have to endure many a joke about the influence of this same process upon me. Oh! the blow was struck before that time.

We have been to visit the poor English widow, under the shade of whose trees he first confessed that he loved me. She was happy, for her son was perfectly recovered, and we gave them ample cause to remember us gratefully, for we have put them in a way to become independent on the score of fortune. My husband has inquired out every person to

whom he has heard that I have been partial, and in some way he has made them feel that all that were once my friends have now become his.

We have had a visit to-day from his former pupil and admirer, Dorothea. She is somewhat untrained and wild in the expression of her feelings, but is a very good girl; and her affection for my husband, and her kindness to him when he was on his way as a volunteer to Mexico, have very much endeared her to me. She congratulated me, but said that she envied me; for that she had loved him sooner and more than I did. When my husband came in, a burning blush evinced her sincerity. He saluted her with a kiss, according to the custom of our country.

We expect to start in the early spring for the North, and on our way will endeavor to find Jeannette Vonpelt. If we are successful, we will take her along with us, for she is very dear to us both.

Hoping that I may continue to hear from you,

I remain yours sincerely,

ISABEL.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## CONCLUSION.

HERE terminated the letters of Isabel, and I repaired to my fellow traveler, impatiently requesting him to redeem his promise that he would bring his adventures from where his wife had left them, to the present time. I pressed him to be expeditious, for the mouth of Red River was already in view.

He resumed as follows: "You see, sir," said he, "that in the eyes of my wife I am a personage of no small importance. I have nothing further to relate that the most gross egotism could magnify into the shape of adventure. In these days a peaceable and well bred man may journey from Mexico to Boston without much trouble, so that he has a good carriage and horses and plenty of money; and as we have these, and make every previous arrangement that experience has admonished, or opulence can furnish, this journey is only a long, tranquil migration from one region to another. We have been married nearly four years, and have a fine boy, a happy union of Spanish and Yankee, with a very fair complexion, and eyes and hair as black as a sloe, to my mind the exact image of his mamma. The grandparents dote on him, and claim every right to spoil him in their way.

"Of Isabel I can truthfully say that I love her more hear-



tily than I did on the day when I led her to the altar. We have experienced no such period as the honeymoon, and we have never had a word that could be called a dispute about religion, or in fact about anything else. Sir, I have been absent more than five months, and I have traveled more than a thousand leagues. You can hardly imagine my impatience to be at home. If I had wings you would soon lose sight of me in the air. I fancy that I can see my dear Isabel leading our boy under those noble sycamores in front of our mansion, her white robes fluttering in the wind, and she looking impatiently in the direction of my return. May she have been in the charge of good angels! Captain, when shall we be at Alexandria?" The answer was, "Perhaps in two days." "Then in fourteen days more I shall be at home and never will I leave it again without the dear ones that I have left there."

"I, too," said I, "have been absent from those I love seven long months, and I left them a miserable invalid, expecting never to return. I am, it may be, as impatient as you, and the more so, as I am nearer home. But I am particularly interested to hear something further about the good Jeannette."

"I am entirely willing," he replied, "to inform you what became of her. It is your own proper eulogy to be interested in that charming girl, as good as she is beautiful. But for me, most people consider the interest of such adventures as mine at an end the moment the parties are married; and ours is an old story of that sort by four good long years."

"Yes," said I, "but there I have always differed from the rest. My interest is most intense at the point where that of others ends. For my part, I am more interested in you and your Isabel under your sycamores at Durango than in any period before you were married.

If happiness on earth is not all a joke, a mere poet's reverie, it is only to be found in the shades of domestic affection. I have meditated on all sides of ambition, distinction, wealth and pride, and my feelings constantly returned to the ark of domestic love as the only place where happiness can find rest for the sole of her foot."

He then resumed:

"About the middle of March, 1825, we escaped from the tears and embraces of my wife's family and started with Fergus and his wife in a coach for the American frontier. It was during the balmy days of spring. We had a delightful trip. We stopped to contemplate the battlefield of Palos Blancos on our way to San Antonio. The *calabozo* where I was imprisoned, the terrible spot where so many poor fellows underwent military execution, and where I expected the same fate, was contemplated with solemn interest; and as I related the sad story a couple of fine eyes glistened with tears of sympathy.

Nothing happened worth mentioning, until we arrived at Natchitoches. It was the first town under the United States government that Isabel had ever seen; and although it is an odd mixture of Spanish, French and American, her black eyes glistened with an intense curiosity.

Here I was recognized by many of my compatriots in our unfortunate attempt at revolutionizing Texas. They received me with open arms. We told our stories, and my classmate, to whom I was much attached, who was practicing law here, and who had been advanced to the dignity of judge, cracked some of our college jokes again. He related his adventures, by which, from the very lowest part of fortune's wheel, where the issues of the battle of Palos Blancos had left him, he had gradually risen to his present independence and good fortune.

When we arrived on the Mississippi, she never tired in

admiring the beautiful steamboat that took us in at the mouth of Red River. She was delighted with the notion of so splendid and comfortable a hotel floating against the current of the river. Then her curiosity started a thousand questions about the machinery, etc.

I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed this journey with my wife; fresh, young, pleased with everything, reared in a convent of one of the most ancient nations in Europe, and here examining the wonders of the New World. Natchez, Louisville and still more Cincinnati seemed to her fine towns, and she could hardly comprehend that they were but little more than thirty years old. The number of river crafts and steamboats that were continually passing up and down was a fresh source of astonishment. You can imagine her surprise on entering the neat and beautiful city of Baltimore, with its noble public edifices, so totally unlike a Spanish town. Philadelphia and New York increased this surprise, and more than all, the multitudes of fine looking and well dressed people of both sexes that were threading the streets. Accustomed as she had been to see such crowds of beggars even in the City of Mexico, she eagerly inquired where we contrived to dispose of the canaille of our cities.

My own heart beat high when I entered my native State, for we traveled from New York to Boston by land, and at length I was able to point out to Isabel the spires of the latter place, now considerably more numerous than when I left it. I sent Fergus forward to apprise my friends of our arrival, while we enjoyed a day's rest and the beauties of the city. After we had made a sufficient number of purchases for presents, we set out for my father's place. I really felt some refreshing feelings as we started with my fine foreign wife, and my grand equipage over the Charlestown bridge for my father's



house. I thought how nicely I would dumbfound those good natured soothsayers who predicted that I should come out at the little end of the horn! How comfortable the young men would feel who envied me the distinction of a college education, and who prophesied that the pride of the lazy fellow would have to come down after all! I might exercise a little quiet, snug exultation in the faces of those who foretold that I should lay my bones as a beggar in the forests of the West. These were but the childish heritage of Adam, and I cast them from me in a moment.

I will leave you to imagine my feelings as we proceeded on our journey. Tears, driven from their fountains by confused and blended feelings, filled my eyes. "How far," I cried, "I have wandered! How much I have seen! How often I have been in danger! More than once my grave seems to have been prepared for me! And behold I am here again, safe, sound, and happy, with a fortune beyond my most avaricious wish, and the prettiest and best wife in the world. Look, Isabel, yonder are the pines whose moaning tops first gave me the mingled feelings of awe, sublimity and melancholy. Yonder is the sweet stream where in my boyhood days I have bathed and angled a thousand times. I can now distinguish the door of the church. Venerable old pastor! Thy loud and earnest voice, which resounded there for more than half a century, is still in death. Thy wornout frame is removed from the pulpit to the churchyard and a young man 'who knew not Joseph,' has arisen in his place." Feelings of this sort continued to crowd upon me until we were recognized by my native villagers. It was a perfect press. In a few moments I had the satisfaction of embracing my good father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and finding all well. I paused with astonishment in looking at my

mother. I had been gone eight years, and she looked eight years younger than when I left home. My father had attained the dizzy heights of his ambition. He was an esquire, a member of the General Court, carried a large silver-headed cane, and wore a long-tailed wig. My sisters, bless my heart, I should not have known them! They had long Italian faces, and made my wife as pretty dancing-school beaus as you could imagine. My brothers were more unsophisticated and received me with true Yankee welcome. There was something of mincing and restraint for some time, and apparently a touch at ceremony. But Isabel, foreigner though she was, had good sense and instinctive perception of what is right everywhere. She soon put them all at their ease by a joy so evidently sincere, by an affection for everything that appertained to me so manifest, that in half a day she was a sister and daughter in the family.

I can hardly convey to you an idea of our happiness. We had invitations, dinners and parties without number. Isabel goes regularly with me to our worship. She was charmed with our singing and our young minister, but returned to the strictness of her own religion. With respect to our discipline and manners she has all the hearty admiration of an ancient Puritan. She said, "I admire the cleverness and industry of your young women. I reverence those institutions, and especially your free schools, which spread intelligence and emulation through the community. My heart is affected with the kindness of your ordinances in regard to the suffering and the poor, and with your numerous charities."

We will have a good house and grounds at the North, and every spring and autumn will imitate the birds. We are not so foolish as to expect "no sorrow in our note," though we mean to have "no winter in our year."

My father remonstrated with me on the folly of ever returning to Mexico. He would have me sell all there and fix myself permanently here; and he expressed so much reluctance at the idea of another separation that I invited him to share my journey with me, and spend the next winter with me in Durango. "Look here, son Rob," said he, "I would not swap that orchard and the broad meadow and the barn hill field for all the land in Mexico. As to your Dons and Condes and all that stuff, see this long-tailed wig; I would rather be a justice of the peace, and of the sessions, in this town, and in the State of Massachusetts, than to be the first lord in Mexico. No! no! Your wife is a sweet woman, that's not to be disputed; and the Mexican dollars are all very well in their place. But you will never catch me beyond the great river Connecticut."

Although my father was not disposed to migrate with us, there were others that were full willing; and we could have carried back half the village, had we chosen; I have a young sister, Alice, who did accompany us back, and Isabel thinks as much of her as if she were her own sister. It was a sad day for the village when we started on our return.

One word about Jeannette to satisfy you on that score, and this story is at an end. I have been at the North to see if our country house will be ready for us next spring, and to attend to Jeannette's money affairs. I should have told you, but I did not wish to break the thread of discourse, that on our first trip to the North, we found Jeannette in the family of the Methodist minister. He lived in a small village on the Mississippi, where he was a local preacher. The boat stopped there to take on wood. I sent in my name and was instantly admitted. At sight of me she sprang from her chair, and the transition in



her countenance from crimson to deadly pale, showed that she was deeply affected. She had heard that I was married, and her countenance soon became calm. There was the same lovely face, and there sat upon it a kind of pale, pensive and indefinable melancholy. As soon as I told her that Isabel was on the boat and wished to see her, she instantly seized her bonnet and accompanied me on board. I felt happy to see those lovely women exchange all the tokens of a most cordial regard, although each knew how I had stood in the affections of the other, for I had informed my wife that Jeannette had had the first offer of my hand. She related to us how she had passed her time since she had left me. It was a scene of sad and tiresome uniformity. Disappointed in the warmest affection of the heart, and that heart peculiarly constituted to receive the purest impressions of religion, it was in a state exactly fitted for the moulding of such a man as he was, with whom she sojourned. With religion always in his mouth, and with enough of morals and strictness to be always respectable; full of long and reiterated observances, and apparently always having, as the phrase is, the world under his feet; aiming always, too, in his religious exercises at the feelings, placing much dependence upon frames of mind, and considering the exultation or the depression of feeling, as the graduated marks of nearness to God, or distance from Him, it was no wonder that he gained upon the sensitive and thoughtful nature of his fair associate. There was something imposing, too, in this assumed austerity of a young and handsome man, something sublime in this apparent conquest of all earthly affections. Jeannette became a regular attendant at their class meetings. She made, indeed, she confessed, a poor hand at relating her experiences. But some considerate sister in the meeting was always ready to eke it out with something of her

own. She discovered in the end, that she had always been in training, always under an invisible, unobserved inspection. "She admired," she said, "the strictness of observance in the family." But her native taste and tact always rose against all the cant of their sect, the nasal twang, and the uproar and riot of their worship. She thought their ardor, their devotedness to their cause, the tie of kind and fraternal feeling toward each other, which binds them together, and which is so little like the cold selfishness of other denominations in their intercourse together, worthy of all imitation and all praise.

In this way, without any particular affection for this man, she was in a fair way to become his wife. He had offered himself, and in her loneliness she painfully felt the want of a protector, and in her state of mind she probably thought one good man would do as well as another. Unhappily for him, a scheme of deep contrivance, and a plot to bring this about, was defeated by one of those accidents by which heaven seems to delight to frustrate the deepest laid plans of human wisdom. A letter sent by the minister to his sister, who was away on a visit, was lost by a little black boy who did errands for the family. He was carrying this letter and was overtaken by a thunder storm. He was frightened at the storm and lost the letter; and to avoid the whipping generally consequent upon such an act, he declared that he had put the letter in the office as he was charged. It was dropped, as it happened, in a grove through which Jeannette was accustomed to take daily walks. She saw the letter lying on the ground, and recognized the handwriting of her host and admirer. It had been wet in the storm, and the wind in driving it against the bushes had broken it open. Jeannette took it up, and her name struck her as the first word she saw in it. Some vague suspicion that she was

practiced upon, stimulated her curiosity to read, and as it was from her future husband to his sister, she felt justified in availing herself of this unsought opportunity of entering into their secret thoughts. Such a disgusting scene of palpable contrivance between them to bring about the union, disclosed itself, feelings so basely mercenary, such curious replies to the sister, who seems in a letter to which this was an answer, to have been stipulating, and rather disposed to complain about her share of the dividends in the concern, that she tore the letter in pieces, indignantly broke off the negotiations, and told the gentleman that she had changed her mind. Nothing could exceed his disappointment and exasperation. From that time she had suffered everything, had been hinted at, talked about, and had endured every sort of persecution. They had even resorted to the despicable revenge of defaming her with the villagers, and she had been seeking for a change of place when we arrived. "Dear Isabel," said she, "I hope you will allow me to accompany you." Isabel told her that it was the very thing she intended to propose. We immediately sent for her trunks. We called for her bill, and when sent, we doubled the pay, but still they sent her away with deep murmurs and denunciations of the wrath of heaven, which threw a gloom over her long after we were under way. I told her that it was well for us all that there is a higher and more equitable tribunal than mere human opinion.

She went on with us, loving and being loved; Isabel regards her as a sister. In my native village I have observed the old minister was dead, and a young one settled in his place. I considered him an exemplary, amiable and accomplished man. Jeannette was received in my father's family as a child. The minister saw her there, and loved her at first sight. He made his offer through me, and she

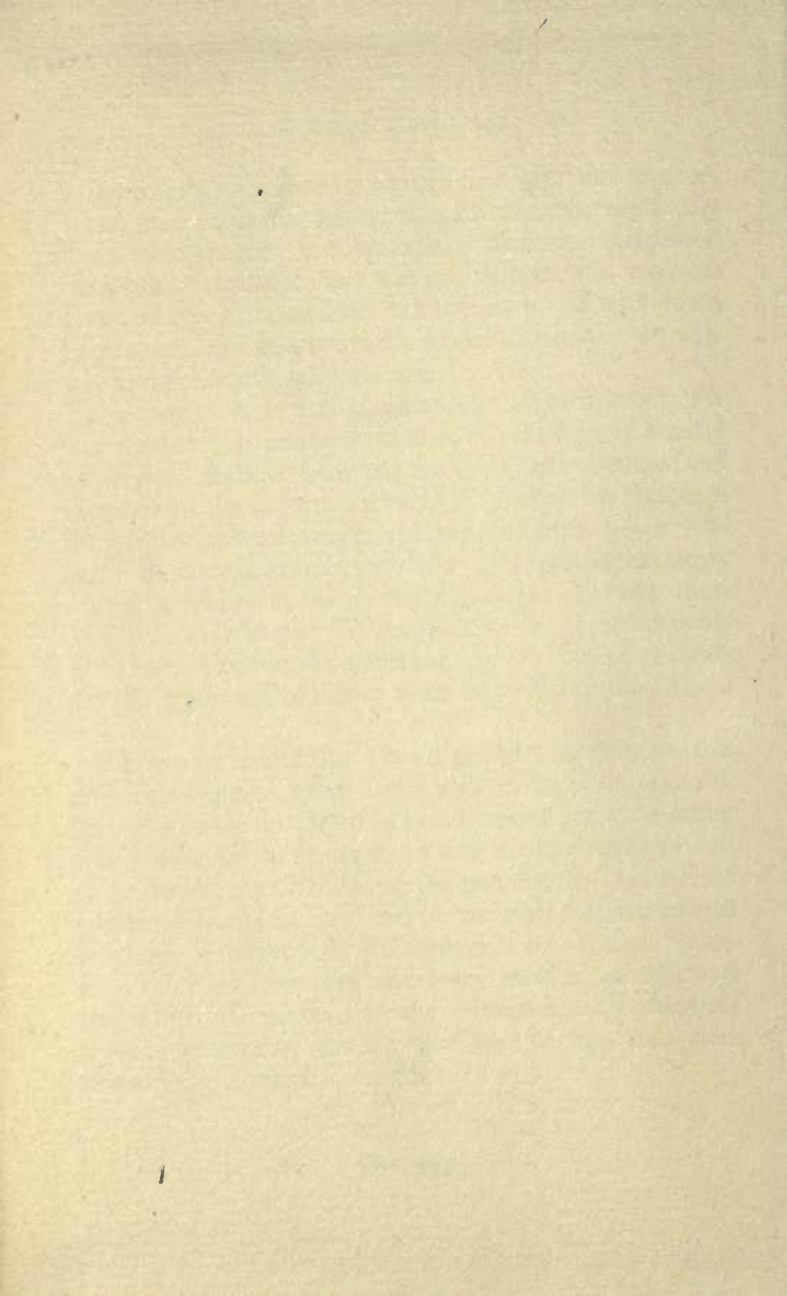


in making her decision, consulted my wife and me, acknowledging that she hardly thought that she could love him with that ardor and romanticity that some considered necessary to marriage; but that she thought him a serious man, and a gentleman, and liked him very well, and would be guided in her answer exactly by our opinions. My wife and I were unanimously for him.

I waited on him with the decision. Poor fellow! He is a nervous man, and loves with all his might, and I could see that he thrilled with the agony of apprehension and suspense to the deepest nerve of his frame. I had once sat on that gridiron myself, and had a suitable fellow feeling. He was not long in suspense. His rapture, of course, was proportioned to his doubts and fears. We saw them married, and happy; he has secured a most amiable wife, and an independent fortune, and we a most delightful appendage to our society when we reside in the village.

I have only to add that when I parted from this amiable man hurrying back to his Isabel with the eagerness and impatience of love, my fancy ran on to sketching his meeting with his family in Durango. I was verging toward something like envy at the idea of the rare felicity that seemed to have fallen to his lot. But on the whole, I remembered how soon the great leveler, Death, will set all these things on a footing of equality and every emotion of that sort died away. I returned to the retirement and obscurity of my own family, blessing God that he had once more restored me to them in health.













**A** 000 094 790 3



